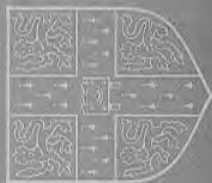


... Past Papers



BEC HIGHER

STUDENT'S BOOK WITH ANSWERS

EXAMINATION PAPERS FROM
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
ESOL EXAMINATIONS

Cambridge Books for Cambridge Exams ...

Cambridge
BEC Higher

3

WITH ANSWERS

*Examination papers from
University of Cambridge
ESOL Examinations:
English for Speakers of
Other Languages*

 CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo
 Cambridge University Press
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK
 www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521672030

© Cambridge University Press 2006

It is normally necessary for written permission for copying to be obtained in advance from a publisher. The candidate answer sheets at the back of this book are designed to be copied and distributed in class. The normal requirements are waived here and it is not necessary to write to Cambridge University Press for permission for an individual teacher to make copies for use within his or her own classroom. Only those pages which carry the wording '© UCLES 2006' may be copied.

First published 2006

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN-13 978-0521-67203-0 Student's Book with answers

ISBN-10 0-521-67203-1 Student's Book with answers

ISBN-13 978-0521-67206-1 Audio Cassette

ISBN-10 0-521-67206-6 Audio Cassette

ISBN-13 978-0521-67205-4 Audio CD

ISBN-10 0-521-67205-8 Audio CD

ISBN-13 978-0521-67204-7 Self-study Pack

ISBN-10 0-521-67204-X Self-study Pack

Contents

Thanks and acknowledgements iv

Introduction 1

Test 1
 Reading 18
 Writing 28
 Listening 30
 Speaking 34

Test 2
 Reading 36
 Writing 46
 Listening 48
 Speaking 52

Test 3
 Reading 54
 Writing 64
 Listening 66
 Speaking 70

Test 4
 Reading 72
 Writing 82
 Listening 84
 Speaking 88

Key (including transcripts and sample answers)

Test 1 90
 Test 2 97
 Test 3 105
 Test 4 113

Speaking test interlocutor frames 123

Sample Answer Sheets 124

Introduction

TO THE STUDENT

This book is for candidates preparing for the Cambridge Business English Certificate Higher examination. It contains four complete tests based on past papers.

The BEC Suite

The Business English Certificates (BEC) are certificated examinations which can be taken on various dates throughout the year at approved Cambridge BEC centres. They are aimed primarily at individual learners who wish to obtain a business-related English language qualification, and provide an ideal focus for courses in Business English. Set in a business context, BEC tests English language, not business knowledge. BEC is available at three levels – Preliminary, Vantage and Higher.

The BEC Suite is linked to the five ALTE/Cambridge levels for language assessment, and to the Council of Europe's Framework for Modern Languages. It is also aligned with the UK Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's National Standards for Literacy, within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

BEC	Equivalent Main Suite Exam	Council of Europe Framework Level	UK NQF Level
BEC Higher	Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE)	C2 (ALTE Level 5)	Level 2*
BEC Vantage	Certificate in Advanced English (CAE)	C1 (ALTE Level 4)	Level 1
BEC Preliminary	First Certificate in English (FCE)	B2 (ALTE Level 3)	Entry 3
	Preliminary English Test (PET)	B1 (ALTE Level 2)	
	Key English Test (KET)	A2 (ALTE Level 1)	

* This represents the level typically required for employment purposes to signify the successful completion of compulsory secondary education in the UK.

BEC Higher

The BEC Higher examination consists of four papers:

Reading	1 hour
Writing	1 hour 10 minutes
Listening	40 minutes (approximately)
Speaking	16 minutes

Thanks and acknowledgements

The authors and publishers are grateful to the following for permission to use copyright material in *BEC Higher* 3. While every effort has been made, it has not been possible to identify the sources of all the material used and in such cases the publishers would welcome information from the copyright owners.

p. 19: Adapted text 'Where is your business?' by Rupert Merson, *BDO Stoy Hayward Research*, 2002. Used by permission of BDO Stoy Hayward; p. 20: Adapted text 'How effective is your marketing?' by Ray Perry, *The Guardian* 12 November 2001. Used by kind permission of The Chartered Institute of Marketing; p. 22: Adapted text 'Do your interviewers really know what they're doing' by Sarah Richardson, *The Guardian* 17 February 2001. Used by permission of the author; p. 27: Adapted text 'The essentials for good IT training' by Jamie Sene from *Business International*, Spring/Summer 2001. Used by permission of Copybook Solutions; p. 37: Adapted text 'The feel good factor' by Erika Lucas, featured in *Professional Manager* (2002) by the Chartered Management Institute – www.managers.org.uk/professionalmanagers; p. 38: Adapted text 'Introducing T-shaped management' by Morten T Hansen and Bolko von Oetinger from *Harvard Business Review*, March 2001. Used by permission of Harvard Business School; p. 40: Adapted text 'Ethical Dilemma' by Linda Broadbent © Linda Broadbent. This article first appeared in *Marketing Business* (the journal of the Chartered Institute of Marketing) June 2002; p. 42: Adapted text 'Leisure Time' by Joanna Grigg from *Portfolio Working* © Joanna Grigg. Used by permission of the author; p. 44: Adapted text 'Playing the frock market' by Josh Sims, *The Independent* 2 April 2000 © The Independent News & Media (UK) Limited; p. 56: Adapted text 'If downsizing, protect the corporate memory' by Alison Maitland, *The Financial Times* 16 October 2001, p. 58: Adapted text 'General Motors leaves its old self standing' by Tim Burt, *The Financial Times* 24 June 2002, p. 74: Adapted text 'Shoppers wary of premium label' by Virginia Matthews, *The Financial Times* 29 July 2002, p. 76: Adapted text 'Starting on the hard road to a winning formula' by Fergal Byrne, *The Financial Times* 30 March 2000. © The Financial Times Limited; p. 62: 'How to regain your flagging motivation for work' by Annabelle Thorpe, *The Guardian*, 24 February 2002. Used by kind permission of the author; p. 63: Adapted extract from *How to be a better Time Manager* by Jane Smith, © 1997 Jane Smith. Used by kind permission of the author; p. 78: Adapted text 'Small firms count cost of sickness, by Tracy Boles, *The Business* 11/12 August 2002. © The Business.

Test of Reading (1 hour)

This paper consists of six parts with 52 questions, which take the form of two multiple matching tasks, two multiple choice tasks, a cloze test and an error identification task. Part 1 contains five short texts or a longer text divided into five sections, and Parts 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 each contain one longer text. The texts are taken from newspapers, business magazines, business correspondence, books, leaflets, brochures, etc. They are all business-related, and are selected to test a wide range of reading skills and strategies.

Test of Writing (1 hour 10 minutes)

For this paper, candidates are required to produce two pieces of writing. For Part 1, they write a short report based on graphic input. For Part 2, they choose whether to write a short report, a piece of business correspondence or a proposal. Candidates are asked to write 120 to 140 words for Part 1 and 200 to 250 words for Part 2. Assessment is based on achievement of task, range and accuracy of vocabulary and grammatical structures, organisation, content, and appropriacy of register and format.

Test of Listening (approximately 40 minutes)

This paper consists of three parts with 30 questions, which take the form of a note completion task, a multiple matching task and a multiple choice task. Part 1 contains a monologue in a work-related situation, Part 2 contains five very short monologues, and Part 3 contains one longer conversation between two or more people. The texts are audio-recordings based on a variety of sources including interviews, face-to-face conversations and documentary features. They are all business-related, and are selected to test a wide range of listening skills and strategies.

Test of Speaking (16 minutes)

The Speaking test consists of three parts, which take the form of an interview section, a short presentation on a business topic, and a discussion. In the standard test format, candidates are examined in pairs by two examiners: an interlocutor and an assessor. The assessor awards a mark based on the following four criteria: Grammar and Vocabulary, Discourse Management, Pronunciation and Interactive Communication. The interlocutor provides a global mark for the whole test.

Marks and results

The four BEC Higher papers total 120 marks, after weighting. Each paper is weighted to 30 marks. A candidate's overall grade is based on the total score gained in all four papers. It is not necessary to achieve a satisfactory level in all four papers in order to pass the examination. Certificates are given to candidates who pass the examination with grade A, B or C. A is the highest. The minimum successful performance in order to achieve a grade C corresponds to about 60% of the total marks. You will also be informed if you do particularly well in any individual paper. D and E are failing grades. Every candidate is provided with a Statement of Results, which includes a graphical display of their performance in

each paper. These are shown against the scale Exceptional – Good – Borderline – Weak and indicate the candidate's relative performance in each paper.

TO THE TEACHER

Candidate

Each year BEC is taken by over 70,000 candidates throughout the world. Most candidates are either already in work or studying in preparation for the world of work.

Content, preparation and assessment

Material used throughout BEC is as far as possible authentic and free of bias, and reflects the international flavour of the examination. The subject matter should not advantage or disadvantage certain groups of candidates, nor should it offend in areas such as religion, politics or sex.

TEST OF READING

Part	Main Skill Focus	Input	Response	No. of questions
1	Reading for gist and global meaning	Authentic business-related text – either a single text or five short, related texts (approx. 450 words in total)	Matching	8
2	Reading for structure and detail	Authentic business-related text (approx. 450–500 words) with sentence-length gaps	Matching	6
3	Understanding general points and specific details	Longer text based on authentic source material (approx. 500–600 words)	4-option multiple choice	6
4	Reading – vocabulary and structure	Single business-related text with primarily lexical gaps (approx. 250 words)	4-option multiple choice cloze	10
5	Reading – structure and discourse features	Single business-related text with structure and discourse gaps (approx. 250 words)	Rational deletion Open cloze	10
6	Reading – understanding sentence structure; error identification	Short text (approx. 150–200 words). Identification of additional unnecessary words in text	Proof-reading	12

Reading Part One

This is a matching task. The text is approximately 450 words long, and is made up of five related short texts of authentic origin. Examples could be a set of related product descriptions, a set of advertisements (for instance, for

different types of services), notices or messages, book or video reviews, short newspaper items on related topics. Texts may be edited, but the source is authentic. They are identified as texts A–E.

There are eight statements, each of which is one sentence long, numbered 1–8. Each statement can be matched with only one of the texts. The candidate's task is to read the statement and then scan the texts for the one to which each statement applies. Candidates are tested on whether they can understand the language of the statement and relate it to the meaning of the text, which is expressed in different language.

Preparation

- present students with sets of related short texts (e.g. job advertisements, hotel information, etc.) from newspapers, magazines, brochures;
- longer texts may also be divided into sub-headed sections;
- students should be encouraged to identify facts or ideas within each text, describing how the texts are similar and what differences they contain;
- the register or style of the task sentences is likely to differ from that of the texts and students should be given practice in recognising the same information in different styles, e.g. by rewriting advertisements into objective prose;
- the task is designed to go beyond simple word-matching and students will need to practise paraphrasing;
- activities that help students to identify target information among otherwise superfluous text (e.g. choosing what to watch from TV listings) would be beneficial;
- above all, students should treat the task as an example of information-processing skills which are frequently employed in social and professional life.

Reading Part Two

This is a gapped text with six sentence-length gaps. The text is about 450 to 500 words long, and comes from an authentic business-related source, although it may be edited. Sources include business articles from newspapers or magazines, books on topics such as management, or company literature such as annual reports. Candidates have to read the text and then identify the correct sentence to fill each gap from a set of eight sentences marked A–H. Sentence H is the example, and one other sentence is a distractor which does not fit any of the gaps. Understanding of not only the meaning of the text but some of the features of its structure is tested.

Preparation

- this task requires an overt focus on cohesion and coherence to which many students may not be accustomed;
- it would be helpful for students to reassemble texts that have been cut up, discussing why texts fit together as they do;
- it would also be useful for students to discuss why sentences do or do not fit together;
- students could benefit from altering the cohesion of texts to make sentences that do not fit together do so, and vice versa;

- since culture affects discourse, including the order of argument development, discussions exploring this would be beneficial;
- the cut and paste functions of word-processing, where available, could be exploited for this task.

Reading Part Three

This task consists of a text accompanied by four-option multiple choice items. The stem of a multiple choice item may take the form of a question or an incomplete sentence. There are six items, which are placed after the text. The text is about 500 to 600 words long. Sources of original texts may be the general and business press, company literature, and books on topics such as management. Texts may be edited, but the source is authentic.

Preparation

- multiple choice questions are a familiar and long-standing type of test; here they are used to test opinion and inference rather than straightforward facts;
- correct answers are designed not to depend on simple word-matching, and students' ability to interpret paraphrasing should be developed;
- students should be encouraged to pursue their own interpretation of relevant parts of the text and then check their idea against the options offered, rather than reading all the options first;
- it could be useful for students to be given perhaps one of the wrong options only, and for them to try to write the correct answer and another wrong option.

Reading Part Four

This task is a modified cloze: in other words, a gapped text in which the gaps are carefully chosen. There are ten multiple choice items, most of which test vocabulary.

The text is approximately 250 words long, and is based on authentic source material of one of the text types listed above. The candidate's task is to choose the correct option, from the four available, to fill each gap.

Preparation

- it is important for students to appreciate that the correct answer in each case is correct in relation to the gap itself, rather than in relation to the other three options;
- it is worth emphasising that this task tests lexical and collocational knowledge, and that the best route to this knowledge is to read widely within the kinds of texts that the task employs;
- it is worth discussing what aspects of linguistic knowledge are tested (collocations, fixed phrases, register, etc.);
- it might be useful to give students gapped texts and have them produce alternative words which fit and which do not fit the gaps;
- any vocabulary-building activity is likely to be helpful in preparing for this task.

Reading Part Five

This task is an open cloze: a gapped text in which the candidate has to supply the word to fill each gap. There are ten items. Gaps are formed by rational deletion, being chosen rather than being simply those which occur if (for example) every seventh word is deleted. The focus is on structure, and coherence/cohesion in the text. Items tested may include prepositions, auxiliary verbs, pronouns, conjunctions, etc.

The text is based on authentic material, and it is approximately 250 words long. A title is usually included.

Preparation

- the kinds of words which are gapped may well correspond to the kinds of errors students make and therefore discussion of photocopied examples of students' compositions could be helpful;
- students should be encouraged to circle the word or words in the text that dictate what the answer will be, in order for them to see that such clues to the answer may be adjacent to the gap or several words distant;
- students should brainstorm various likely words which might fit a particular gap, and then discuss why the ones that do not fit do not do so;
- students could be given several possible answers for a gap and discuss why the correct answer is correct;
- this task tests grammatical and structural aspects of language and any practice in these areas should be beneficial.

Reading Part Six

This is an error-correction or proof-reading task based on a text of about 150 to 200 words, with twelve items. Candidates identify additional or unnecessary words in a text. This task can be related to the authentic task of checking a text for errors, and suitable text types are therefore letters, publicity materials, etc. The text is presented with twelve numbered lines, which are the lines containing the items. Further lines at the end may complete the text, but these are not numbered.

Preparation

- students should be reminded that this task represents a kind of editing that is common practice, even in their first language;
- any work on error analysis is likely to be helpful for this task;
- it may well be that photocopies of students' own writing could provide an authentic source for practice;
- a reverse of the exercise (giving students texts with missing words) might prove beneficial.

Marks

One mark is given for each correct answer. The total score is then weighted to 30 marks for the whole Reading paper.

TEST OF WRITING

Part	Functions/Communicative Task	Input	Response	Register
1	e.g. describing or comparing figures from graphic input, making inferences	Rubric and graphic input	Short report (medium may be memo or email) (120–140 words)	Neutral/formal
2	Report: describing, summarising Correspondence: e.g. explaining, apologising, reassuring, complaining Proposal: describing, summarising, recommending, persuading	Rubric, possibly supplemented by brief input text, e.g. notice, advert	Candidates choose from report (medium could be memo or email) or business correspondence (medium may be letter, fax or email) or proposal (medium could be memo or email) (200–250 words)	Neutral/formal

For BEC Higher, candidates are required to produce two pieces of writing:

- a short report based on graphic input;
- one of the following (of the candidate's choosing):
 - a report: the report will contain an introduction, main body of findings and conclusion; it is possible that the report may be delivered through the medium of a memo or an email;
 - a piece of business correspondence: this means correspondence with somebody outside the company (e.g. a customer or supplier) on a business-related matter, and the delivery medium may be a letter, fax or email;
 - a proposal: this has a similar format to a report but, unlike the report, the focus of the proposal is on the future, with the main focus being on recommendations for discussion; it is possible that the proposal may be delivered through the medium of a memo or an email.

Writing Part One

This is a guided writing task, in which the candidate produces a brief (120–140-word) report. The task provides a realistic situation in which it is necessary to analyse some sort of graphic input and express the information it conveys in words. Graphs, bar charts and pie charts of the type frequently used in the business pages of newspapers, company reports and brochures may provide a starting point. The graphic input is taken from an authentic source, but may be modified in the same way that a text may be edited. The rubric acts to amplify and clarify the situation, as well as making clear what the task involves.

Writing Part Two

In most parts of the BEC Writing tests, all candidates are required to perform the same task because there is no danger of individuals or groups of candidates being disadvantaged by that task. The exception is BEC Higher Writing Part Two: in order to generate the range of language which is characteristic of this

level of language learner, the task contains no input or minimal input, resulting in a relatively high background knowledge requirement from the candidate. In the absence of a choice of tasks this would be likely to disadvantage some candidates, so a choice of tasks is given.

Candidates choose from three options: a report, a piece of business correspondence or a proposal. The task is supplied by the rubric, which provides an authentic reason for writing, and indicates who the piece of writing is being produced for. The input is therefore more detailed and specific than that of the traditional 'essay question' task type.

Preparing for the Writing paper

The first Writing task involves the kind of graphic input of information which is common in the business world, and students should be exposed to a wide range of examples of graphs and charts from newspapers, magazines, company literature, etc. The interpretation involved is the translating of the graphic input into prose, rather than the recommending of action. Students should have practice in the clear and concise presentation of written information. Specific vocabulary and phrasing should also be developed.

The second Writing task requires students to plan carefully in order to be able to produce successful answers. They should be given practice in considering:

- the target reader
- the purpose of writing
- the requirements of the format (letter, report, etc.)
- the main points to be addressed
- the approximate number of words to be written for each point
- suitable openings and closings
- the level of formality required.

Exposure to, and discussion of, as wide a range as possible of relevant texts would be beneficial.

Assessment

An impression mark is awarded for each piece of writing. The general impression mark scheme is used in conjunction with a task-specific mark scheme, which focuses on criteria specific to each particular task. This summarises the content, organisation, register, format and target reader indicated in the task.

The band scores awarded are translated to a mark out of 10 for Part 1 and a mark out of 20 for Part 2. A total of 30 marks is available for Writing.

The general impression mark scheme is interpreted at Council of Europe Level C1.

A summary of the general impression mark scheme is reproduced opposite. Examiners work with a more detailed version, which is subject to regular updating.

General mark scheme – Writing

Band	
5	<p>Full realisation of the task set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All content points included. • Controlled, natural use of language; minimal errors. • Wide range of structure and vocabulary. • Effectively organised, with appropriate use of cohesive devices. • Register and format consistently appropriate. <p>Very positive effect on the reader.</p>
4	<p>Good realisation of the task set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All major content points included; possibly minor omissions. • Natural use of language; errors only when complex language is attempted. • Good range of structure and vocabulary. • Generally well organised, with attention paid to cohesion. • Register and format on the whole appropriate. <p>Positive effect on the reader.</p>
3	<p>Reasonable achievement of the task set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All major content points included; possibly minor omissions. • Reasonable control, although a more ambitious attempt at the task may lead to a number of non-impeding errors. • Adequate range of structure and vocabulary. • Organisation and cohesion are satisfactory. • Register and format reasonable, although not entirely successful. <p>Satisfactory effect on the reader.</p>
2	<p>Inadequate attempt at the task set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some major content points omitted or inadequately dealt with; possibly some irrelevance. • Errors sometimes obscure communication and are likely to be numerous. • Limited range of structure and vocabulary; language is too elementary for this level. • Content is not clearly organised. • Unsuccessful attempt at appropriate register and format. <p>Negative effect on the reader.</p>
1	<p>Poor attempt at the task set.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notable content omissions and/or considerable irrelevance. • Serious lack of control; frequent basic errors. • Narrow range of structure and vocabulary. • Lack of organisation. • Little attempt at appropriate register and format. <p>Very negative effect on the reader.</p>
0	<p>Achieves nothing. Either fewer than 25% of the required number of words or totally illegible or totally irrelevant.</p>

TEST OF LISTENING

Part	Main Skill Focus	Input	Response	No. of questions
1	Listening for and noting specific information	Informational monologue	Gap-filling requiring limited written responses (i.e. no more than three words)	12
2	Listening to identify topic, context, function, speaker's opinion, etc	Five short monologues linked by theme or topic, from five different speakers	Multiple matching	10
3	Listening for gist, specific information, attitudes, etc.	Conversation/interview/discussion between two or more people	3-option multiple choice	8

Listening Part One

This is a sentence-completion, gap-filling or note-taking task. The candidate has to supply only the key words of the answer, which will not be more than three words per item.

The spoken text lasts about two or three minutes and is a monologue. The text is heard twice. It is informational, and focuses on a series of identifiable facts. Topics might involve instructions, changes in arrangements or instructions, the programme for an event or meeting of some kind, or a presentation about a company. The setting for the task could be someone giving information over the telephone, or a speaker addressing a roomful of delegates at a conference or people on a training course.

Listening tasks may be based on recorded material taken from authentic sources or more usually on scripted material. There are twelve items, which are distributed evenly throughout the text, so that candidates have time to record their answers. Answers to items may be numbers or amounts of money, but these will not involve the candidate in any calculations. Items of information are tested in the same order in which the information occurs in the text.

Listening Part Two

This is a matching task based on five short extracts linked by theme or topic and spoken by five different speakers, in monologue form. The texts last a total of approximately three to four minutes.

There are two tasks for each of the five extracts. These tasks relate to the content and purpose of the extracts, and candidates are asked to do any combination of the following: identify speakers, interpret context, recognise the function of what is said, identify the topic, understand specific information, identify a speaker's opinion or feelings.

The series of extracts is heard twice, and candidates must attempt both tasks during this time. It is for the candidates to decide whether they choose to do the first task the first time they listen to the text, and the second task the second time, or whether to deal with the two tasks for each extract together. For each task, they have a list of eight options to choose from.

Materials for this task are scripted, and relate to a business topic or situation.

Listening Part Three

This task consists of a dialogue usually with two or more speakers. There are eight items, which are three-option multiple choice. The task relates to a topic of interest or concern in the world of work. The text is heard twice.

Preparing for the Listening paper

All listening practice should be helpful for students, whether authentic or specially prepared. In particular, discussion should focus on:

- the purpose of speeches and conversations or discussions
 - the speakers' roles
 - the opinions expressed
 - the language functions employed
 - relevant aspects of phonology such as stress, linking and weak forms, etc.
- In addition, students should be encouraged to appreciate the differing demands of each task type. It will be helpful not only to practise the task types in order to develop a sense of familiarity and confidence, but also to discuss how the three task types relate to real-life skills and situations:
- the first is note-taking (and therefore productive), and students should reflect on the various situations in which they take notes from a spoken input; they should also be encouraged to try to predict the kinds of words or numbers that might go in the gaps;
 - the second is a matching (with discrimination) exercise, and reflects the ability to interrelate information between reading and listening and across differing styles and registers;
 - the third involves the correct interpretation of spoken input, with correct answers often being delivered across different speakers.
- In all three tasks, successful listening depends on correct reading, and students should be encouraged to make full use of the pauses during the test to check the written input.

Marks

One mark is given for each correct answer, giving a total score of 30 marks for the whole Listening paper.

TEST OF SPEAKING

Part	Format/Content	Time	Interaction Focus
1	Conversation between the interlocutor and each candidate Giving personal information. Talking about present circumstances, past experiences and future plans, expressing opinions, speculating, etc.	About 3 minutes	The interlocutor encourages the candidates to give information about themselves and to express personal opinions.
2	A 'mini presentation' by each candidate on a business theme Organising a larger unit of discourse Giving information and expressing opinions	About 6 minutes	Each candidate is given prompts which they use to prepare and give a short talk on a business-related topic.
3	Two-way conversation between candidates followed by further prompting from the interlocutor Expressing and justifying opinions, speculating, comparing and contrasting, agreeing and disagreeing, etc.	About 7 minutes	The candidates are presented with a business-related situation to discuss. The interlocutor extends the discussion with further spoken prompts.

The Speaking test is conducted by two oral examiners (an interlocutor and an assessor), with pairs of candidates. The interlocutor is responsible for conducting the Speaking test and is also required to give a mark for each candidate's performance during the whole test. The assessor is responsible for providing an analytical assessment of each candidate's performance and, after being introduced by the interlocutor, takes no further part in the interaction.

The Speaking test is designed for pairs of candidates. However, where a centre has an uneven number of candidates, the last three candidates will be examined together.

Speaking Part One

For this part of the test, the interlocutor asks the candidates questions on a number of personal or work-related subjects.

Speaking Part Two

In this part, each candidate's task is to choose one topic from a set of three, and to talk on it for about one minute. Candidates have one minute in which to prepare, and should use this time to make brief notes. While one candidate speaks, the other listens (and may make notes), after which they ask the candidate who gave the talk a question.

Candidates are again advised to keep in mind the business orientation of this test. It is wise to structure the one-minute talk, for example, as points, with an introduction and conclusion (however brief these must, of necessity, be), and to make the structure explicit when giving the talk in order to show some evidence of planning. Candidates should approach the task as if giving a presentation in a business environment.

Examples of topic areas for the individual Speaking task include the following: advertising, career planning, communications, customer relations, finance, health and safety, management (personnel, production, transport, etc.), marketing, recruitment, sales, technology, training and travel.

Speaking Part Three

This is a two-way collaborative task based on a prompt, which is given to both candidates. The prompt consists of several sentences stating a business-related situation followed by two or three discussion points. Candidates are given time to read the prompt and then they discuss the situation together.

Candidates need to approach the task as a simulation, imagining themselves in a work environment, faced with a real situation to discuss and on which they should try to reach some decisions. The opinions they express, however, are their own. They are not instructed, as in some kinds of role play, to assume particular attitudes or opinions.

Preparing for the Speaking test

Students should be made familiar with the seating arrangements and paired assessment procedures that the Speaking test employs. Any speaking practice should be of benefit, in particular paired and small group work.

- For **Part One**, students should be familiar with the topics that the test covers. Activities designed to develop fluency will be of considerable benefit, as the students need to demonstrate as wide a range of language as possible within the time limits of the test. It should be noted that not only is the test designed to minimise the possibility of attempts to use rehearsed speech, but also that examiners will quickly identify it.
- For **Part Two**, they need to develop the ability to prepare effectively for the long turn they are required to take. They should be given help in developing the skill of long-turn-taking, and in building up a range of discourse features to make their speech both coherent and cohesive. It is also important for them to listen to each others' talks, and be ready to ask relevant questions.
- For **Part Three**, students will benefit from practice in this kind of simulation, where they have to put themselves into a work environment, and collaborate to discuss and decide issues. They should be helped to build up a range of resources for turn-taking and the general negotiating of ideas and opinions.

Assessment

Candidates are assessed on their own performance and not in relation to each other according to the following analytical criteria: Grammar and Vocabulary, Discourse Management, Pronunciation and Interactive Communication. These criteria are interpreted at Higher level. Assessment is based on performance in the whole test and is not related to particular parts of the test.

Both examiners assess the candidates. The assessor applies detailed, analytical scales, and the interlocutor applies a Global Achievement Scale, which is based on the analytical scales. The analytical criteria are further described below:

Grammar and Vocabulary

This refers to range and accuracy as well as the appropriate use of grammatical and lexical forms. At BEC Higher level, a range of grammar and vocabulary is needed to deal with the tasks. At this level, grammar is mainly accurate and vocabulary is used effectively.

Discourse Management

This refers to the coherence, extent and relevance of each candidate's individual performance. Contributions should be adequate to deal with the BEC Higher level tasks.

Pronunciation

This refers to the candidate's ability to produce comprehensible utterances. At BEC Higher level, meanings are conveyed through the appropriate use of stress, rhythm, intonation and clear individual sounds.

Interactive Communication

This refers to the candidate's ability to take an active part in the development of the discourse. At BEC Higher level, candidates should be sensitive to turn-taking throughout most of the test.

Global Achievement Scale

This refers to the candidate's overall performance throughout the test. Throughout the Speaking test, candidates are assessed on their language skills and, in order to be able to make a fair and accurate assessment of each candidate's performance, the examiners must be given an adequate sample of language to assess. Candidates must, therefore, be prepared to provide full answers to the questions asked by either the interlocutor or the other candidate, and to speak clearly and audibly. While it is the responsibility of the interlocutor, where necessary, to manage or direct the interaction, thus ensuring that both candidates are given an equal opportunity to speak, it is the responsibility of the candidates to maintain the interaction as much as possible. Candidates who take equal turns in the interchange will utilise to best effect the amount of time available.

Grading and results

Grading takes place once all scripts have been returned to Cambridge ESOL and marking is complete. This is approximately five weeks after the examination. There are two main stages: grading and awards.

Grading

The four papers total 120 marks, after weighting. Each paper represents 25% of the total marks available. The grade boundaries (A, B, C, D and E) are set using the following information:

- statistics on the candidature
- statistics on the overall candidate performance
- statistics on individual items, for those parts of the examination for which this is appropriate (Reading and Listening)
- the advice of the Principal Examiners, based on the performance of candidates, and on the recommendation of examiners where this is relevant (Writing)
- comparison with statistics from previous years' examination performance and candidature.

A candidate's overall grade is based on the total score gained in all four papers. It is not necessary to achieve a satisfactory level in all four papers in order to pass the examination.

Awards

The Awarding Committee deals with all cases presented for special consideration, e.g. temporary disability, unsatisfactory examination conditions, suspected collusion, etc. The Committee can decide to ask for scripts to be re-marked, to check results, to change grades, to withhold results, etc. Results may be withheld because of infringement of regulations or because further investigation is needed. Centres are notified if a candidate's results have been scrutinised by the Awarding Committee.

Results

Results are reported as three passing grades (A, B and C) and two failing grades (D and E). The minimum successful performance which a candidate typically requires in order to achieve a Grade C corresponds to about 60% of the total marks. Candidates are given Statements of Results which, in addition to their grades, show a graphical profile of their performance on each paper. These are shown against the scale Exceptional – Good – Borderline – Weak and indicate the candidate's relative performance in each paper. Certificates are issued to passing candidates after the issue of Statements of Results and there is no limit on the validity of the certificate.

Further information

For more information about BEC or any other Cambridge ESOL examination write to:

Introduction

Cambridge ESOL Information

1 Hills Road

Cambridge

CB1 2EU

United Kingdom

Tel: +44 1223 553355

Fax: +44 1223 460278

email: ESOL@ucles.org.uk

website: www.CambridgeESOL.org

In some areas, this information can also be obtained from the British Council.

Test 1

READING 1 hour

PART ONE

Questions 1-8

- Look at the statements below and at the five extracts on the opposite page from an article giving advice to people setting up a business.
- Which extract (A, B, C, D or E) does each statement (1-8) refer to?
- For each statement (1-8), mark one letter (A, B, C, D or E) on your Answer Sheet.
- You will need to use some of these letters more than once.
- There is an example at the beginning, (0).

Example:

- 0 Not everyone has the skills required to manage a company.

0 A B C D E

- You should plan ahead in case a founder of the company chooses to leave it.
- A company which is expanding today may not always continue to do so.
- The distribution of equity among the founders can affect the smooth running of the business
- Your function in the organisation is different from that of the other managers.
- Your method of running the business will have to be modified as your company develops.
- Your business may evolve into a form that you are not satisfied with.
- Delay offering employees a financial stake in the company.
- You need to identify your personal strengths and weaknesses.

18

A

So you think you're an entrepreneur, and you want to start up a company. First, be sure you're really an entrepreneur, and not an inventor. Inventors come up with ideas, entrepreneurs make a business out of them: it's important to know where your abilities lie, as inventors can fail miserably at running a business. Also, you need to be confident that you can adapt your management style to meet new demands if your company is a success. Leading the management team of a growing business is very different from leading a newly founded company.

B

If your company proves successful, it will probably change out of all recognition, and may seem to possess a life of its own, with institutional shareholders, regulators and employees to consider as well as customers and bank managers. That is the time to consider how far the aspirations of the business you founded still mirror your own. If they have diverged widely, and you feel you have built just the sort of business that you perhaps tried to escape from in the first place, it may be time to leave.

C

Bringing an idea to life requires an organisation. If you are going into business with your friends, make sure you treat them as professionally as you would your arms-length business partners, because the odds are that you'll fall out with them. It may not seem important at the start, but it will strengthen the company if you ensure that its constitution documents are designed with your specific business and circumstances in mind, and that they clearly establish what will happen in the event of a withdrawal from the business by one of the founding shareholders.

D

Think carefully about the capital structure of the business. You could be storing up a problem for the company in the future – for example, by allocating shares to founders in a way that could lead to a stand-off if they refuse to see eye to eye on key issues. Similarly, when you eventually recruit new senior team members, think carefully about what to offer them. Don't give away share options too early. As a rule of thumb, cash is sufficient reward for knowledge and skill. Keep equity up your sleeve for rewarding commitment.

E

As your business grows, you need to keep the right balance between management control and entrepreneurial spirit. Too much control, and the business will ultimately cease to grow. Too little, and growth could be unsustainable. You'll need to employ managers, but remember that their job is to build the infrastructure to underpin a business that until now may have run on the basis of your salesmanship and excitement. The risk is to bring in managers who are too much like you, without the necessary experience of nursing a newly founded business through its evolution.

19

PART TWO

Questions 9–14

- Read this text taken from an article about marketing.
- Choose the best sentence from the opposite page to fill each of the gaps.
- For each gap (9–14), mark one letter (A–H) on your Answer Sheet
- Do not use any letter more than once.
- There is an example at the beginning. (0).

How effective is your marketing?

Gone are the days when companies had departments full of staff whose role nobody understood (0) ... And rightly so. But when it comes to marketing, what is effectiveness, how do you measure it, and why is its measurement so important?

Businesses are starting to recognise the key marketing questions. Are we providing the right products for the right people at the right price? Are our brands better than those of our competitors? (9) That's because marketing is not the fluffy stuff that can be axed when the going gets tough – it is the essence of business. So if marketing is important, it follows that it pays to know if yours is working.

The first stage in the process is understanding your current position. How successful is your brand today? What is your market share? You should equip yourself with some sound facts and figures on which to base your conclusions. (10) It could be simply to boost sales. You may want to reinforce your leadership in a market or trounce a competitive brand. Influencing future profitability, possibly by building a short-term brand share, may be a priority. A clear objective is essential.

But how do you know if your marketing is achieving your goals? (11) Their success is not just related to how many boxes leave the factory. Effectiveness may not be tangible. It may be financial, it may not. The brand is an intangible asset, but it is now seen as an important one. Quantifying the value of an intangible asset is a difficult, but not impossible task.

It is also necessary to evaluate both long term effectiveness and the short term outcomes of any campaign (12) But the care of a brand is a marathon, not a sprint and it is important not to lose sight of the long-term consequences.

Choosing the right measurement tools to evaluate a campaign is another important issue. (13) The accuracy they thus ensure should be consistent over time and correspond to the wider objectives of the business. Ultimately, marketing must deliver profit.

The essential debate should no longer be about the importance of marketing, but what we should do to measure its effectiveness, and what measures will ensure survival (14) . . . But to others it is likely to be a controversial issue and one which can produce responses leading to widely different directions for their enterprises.

Example:

0 ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☐ H ☒

- A Having done that, next comes establishing what it is that marketing activities should be achieving.
- B Because of this, you may want to generate return on investment, perhaps by raising the quality of your brand.
- C This shift in focus will be taken as read by the most successful businesses.
- D Addressing such issues should mean that profits take care of themselves.
- E Concerning the latter, it may be tempting to be seduced by efforts that yield quick results and satisfy investor pressure for immediate returns.
- F These should be precise and based on empirical data.
- G Good strategies are not necessarily linked to production or sales figures.
- H Today we are all accountable and have to be able to demonstrate the value of our contribution to our businesses.

PART THREE

Questions 15–20

- Read the following article about recruitment in the UK and the questions on the opposite page.
- For each question (15–20), mark one letter (A, B, C or D) on your Answer Sheet.

Graduate recruitment has a growing role. But companies need to know whether their recruitment staff who interview candidates for jobs really know what they're doing.

Carl Gilleard, chief executive of the Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR), acknowledges that in a perfect world, the people who recruit graduates would have been in the role for some time building up workplace knowledge. He says the reality is that the high turnover of graduate recruitment managers in most blue chips means there is little continuity in how companies operate. 'There's the difficulty in maintaining important contact with university careers departments, for example,' he explains. 'You need a depth of understanding to appreciate where the company is coming from and how it's progressing.'

We can identify two specialisms within the recruiter's role. Those that work on the recruitment and selection side need traditional human resources (HR) skills such as good interviewing technique, observation, common sense, objectivity, patience and listening skills. But increasingly there are those who take a strategic view and look more widely at how their company is represented in the marketplace. It's a clear advantage if you can identify with your target

Many young members of middle management are seconded into HR for a year because their firms feel they can identify with job-seeking graduates. Yet in an industry that has been revolutionised by the internet, privatised career services and rocketing numbers in higher education, it is questionable how relevant these managers' experience, or some high-fliers' see a secondment to HR as a sideways move. A firm's HR function might not carry the same kudos as, say, the finance department, although obviously the recruitment and retention of staff is of crucial importance.

how you can reach potential employees, whether that's through virtual law fairs or magazines.

A recent AGR survey suggests that the sectors in which there is less turnover of graduate recruitment managers are more successful in recruiting the graduates they want. The legal sector's sophisticated understanding of the market, for example, means they manage to recruit exactly the right number of trainees despite intense competition and thousands of applications. The people recruiting seem to build up a specialism and then pass on their knowledge and expertise to those new to the graduate recruitment sector.

Georgia de Saram, specialising in graduate recruitment at a law firm, is one of a new breed of young dynamic recruiters who see HR as their vocation rather than a transitory career move. 'I was attracted to the profession because I enjoy working with people and it's an obvious follow-on from my anthropology degree,' she says. 'In this capacity, you get to know people and they know you even though they might not know other people in the firm.' As a recruiter, she sees herself as the interface between graduates and the firm that's looking to attract them. 'It's a bit of a tug of war between law firms for the best trainees – often they'll turn you down in favour of an offer they've received from elsewhere. You need to be good at marketing your firm, to know what interests graduates and

Jackie Alexander, an HR partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers, feels that HR professionals are finally reaching board level and receiving the sort of acknowledgement they deserve. 'They are judged by the value they add to the business,' she says, 'and as a professional services firm, the right people are our biggest asset. As Georgia de Saram points out, from our company's point of view, if I can't establish a rapport with a candidate and bring out their best, it might not be just their future but also ours that is at stake.'

- 15 According to Carl Gilleard, many recruiters lack
- detailed knowledge of their sector.
 - appropriate academic qualifications
 - understanding of graduates' expectations
 - experience of the companies they work for.

- 16 What change in the recruitment process is mentioned in the third paragraph?

- Recruitment staff are re-training.
- Broader approaches are being adopted.
- Traditional abilities are being given less value.
- Different interview processes are being used.

- 17 On what grounds are certain managers seconded to HR departments?

- It is believed that they will relate to potential recruits.
- It is thought that they will benefit most from new developments.
- It is assumed that they will be able to apply specialised knowledge.
- It is expected that they will take advantage of new promotion opportunities.

- 18 Which of the following areas does Georgia de Saram mention as an aspect of her work?

- representing her company effectively to its recruits
- increasing recruitment numbers at her company
- encouraging a wide range of company recruits
- influencing her company's recruitment policy

- 19 What was revealed about law firms in a survey?

- They are competing more effectively than before against other sectors.
- They prefer to retain trainees for extended periods wherever possible.
- They have managed to employ particularly knowledgeable HR staff
- They appeal to those HR managers who are keen for promotion.

- 20 What point is made about recruitment in the final paragraph?

- New levels of qualification are being developed for it.
- It is now being perceived as key to increased profitability.
- Higher numbers of managers are being attracted to it.
- It is becoming central to a business's survival.

PART FOUR

Questions 21–30

- Read the article below about job satisfaction.
- Choose the correct word to fill each gap from **A, B, C** or **D** on the opposite page.
- For each question (21–30), mark one letter (**A, B, C** or **D**) on your Answer Sheet.
- There is an example at the beginning, (0)

How important is job satisfaction?

At its most basic, a job is (0) a collection of tasks and duties. An employee's enjoyment of his or her job will thus (21) depend upon whether or not he or she is happy with the particular mix of tasks and duties (22) to that position. Naturally, each and every member of staff is different – some employees want to do easy, (23) tasks without any responsibilities at all, whilst others prefer challenging varied ones and are pleased to accept any additional responsibilities offered to them. Of course, with a job there are more (24) in play than this: work conditions, pay, working relations and future prospects are (25) too. Nevertheless, tasks and duties are the central feature, and should therefore be considered as a separate (26) in themselves.

So, how important is an employee's enjoyment of his or her individual (27) of tasks and duties? Most business owners and managers would (28) that it is very significant indeed. If a member of staff considers his or her tasks and duties to be too easy or unchallenging or, in contrast, too diverse or irksome, then he or she will feel dissatisfied, and all the inevitable knock-on effects will (29) themselves – absences, lateness, reduced work-rate and performance, conflict, low morale, or even resignations. Thus it is important that staff are well suited to their employment, that jobs are improved as far as possible and redesigned as and when necessary all to (30) that your employees enjoy what they do

Example:

A quite B even C just D yet

0	A	B	C	D
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 21 A highly B largely C extensively D widely
 22 A devoted B intended C identified D allocated
 23 A customary B habitual C usual D routine
 24 A pieces B roles C factors D parts
 25 A connected B relevant C appropriate D related
 26 A result B effect C issue D outcome
 27 A set B order C rank D line
 28 A insist B accentuate C reiterate D assert
 29 A uncover B demonstrate C unmask D manifest
 30 A confirm B ensure C convince D assure

PART FIVE

Questions 31–40

- Read the text below from a brochure.
- For each question (31–40), write one word in CAPITAL LETTERS on your Answer Sheet
- There is an example at the beginning. (0).

Example: 0 A A A A

Paragon: great business space

A new concept for the twenty-first century, Paragon is (0) totally unique showpiece development of high-quality office and call centre buildings, hotel and leisure facilities. Many cities find (31) increasingly difficult to allocate office space, but the city of Wakefield is already ahead (32) the game with Paragon.

Paragon offers an extensive parkland setting with low-density buildings, and room to expand in the future. Yet (33) the vast majority of business parks, Paragon has not been sited to the distant edges of the city. Instead, this large site is only 1 km from the centre of Wakefield. This offers massive advantages: employees can easily walk or cycle to work, saving stress and pollution, and significantly cutting (34) on commuting time. There is (35) more driving along the motorway to distant outposts of business empires for the Paragon worker. But Paragon's location sacrifices nothing (36) terms of communications. It is perfectly placed for road and rail networks.

A further attraction of Wakefield for Paragon is the ready availability of a skilled workforce. (37) are more than 233,000 people available for work within an hour's journey, and an enormous catchment population of 20 million within two hours' travel. The city has a long history (38) an administrative centre, and its recent success in attracting top-name companies is evidence of its solid business credentials. Figures from the developers suggest that up (39) 5,000 jobs could be available in the initial phase of its development, with more to follow, making it (40) of the most significant areas of employment in the region.

PART SIX

Questions 41–52

- Read the text below about IT training.
- In most of the lines (41–52) there is one extra word. It is either grammatically incorrect or does not fit in with the sense of the text. Some lines, however, are correct.
- If a line is correct, write **CORRECT** on your Answer Sheet.
- If there is an extra word in the line, write the extra word in CAPITAL LETTERS on your Answer Sheet.
- The exercise begins with two examples, (0) and (00).

Examples: 0 C O R R E C T T
00 T H A T T

IN-HOUSE IT TRAINING

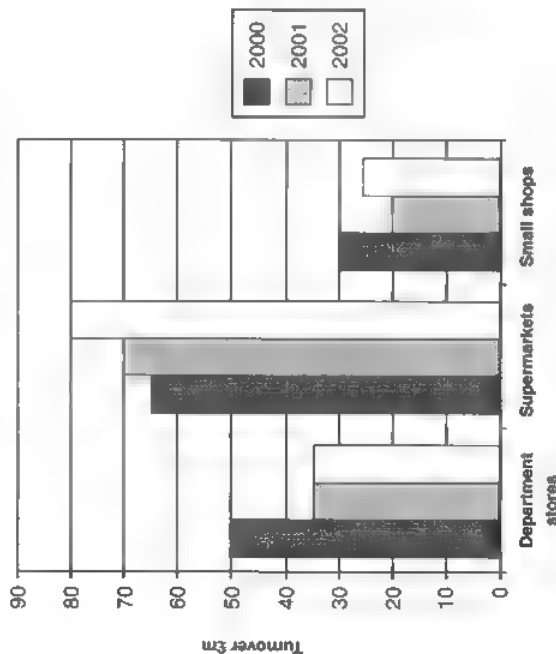
- 0 One of the most important things you should consider before implementing an IT training program is whether that the content is current, accurate and easily be understood by trainees. In general, you should look for a training program that has done an affiliation with industry leaders. For example, a course on Windows 2000 should at least be approved by Microsoft. A course that has been co-developed in this way ensures so that trainees will study relevant and correct information. Also, take into your account the availability of practical exercises. Many off-site, instructor-led programs which provide learning labs for trainee practice, but take good on-site training courses can include hands-on simulations that resemble to an actual networking or desktop environment. This supply allows trainees to interact with the programs without crashing down a live system. It also means that trainees can study while at work so that less time is going missed, and production schedules are not interrupted.

WRITING 1 hour 10 minutes

PART ONE

Question 1

- The graph below shows the turnover for three kinds of retail outlet, all owned by the same company, during a three-year period.
- Using the information from the graph, write a short **report** comparing the changes in turnover in the company's three types of outlet.
- Write **120–140** words.



PART TWO

Write an answer to **one** of the questions **2–4** in this part. Write your answer in **200–250** words.

Question 2

- Your company would like to break into a new overseas market with your new range of sports goods. You have been asked by the Marketing Director to investigate ways of doing this.
- Write a **report** for the Marketing Director, including the following information:
 - how you carried out your research into the market
 - the existing competition
 - your target customers
 - ways of promoting the products in the new market.

Question 3

- Recently you have become unhappy with a service that has been provided to your company for a number of years. You have decided to write a letter of complaint to the service provider.
- Write your **letter** to the company that provides the service, including the following information:
 - which service you are complaining about
 - why you are dissatisfied with the service
 - what action you want the service provider to take
 - what you will do if there is no improvement in the service.

Question 4

- Your Managing Director is considering how to improve the company's internal communications, and has asked you to write a short proposal giving your views on communication within your department
- Write the **proposal** for the Managing Director:
 - describing how communication currently takes place within your department
 - pointing out the weaknesses of the present situation
 - recommending one or two improvements that should be made.

LISTENING

Approximately 40 minutes (including 10 minutes' transfer time)

PART ONE

Questions 1-12

- You will hear the founder of a company called Manshee talking to business students about its development
- As you listen, for questions 1-12, complete the notes, using up to three words or a number
- After you have listened once, replay the recording.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MANSHEE

- The speaker had a problem finding for his computer
- Initially, the speaker bought from businesses.
- Four years after its launch, Manshee's was £6 m.
- The company grew rapidly without having
- The main factor in the company's decisions was the current month's
- fell as a result of competition.
- Manshee's consultants work mostly with
- The consultants made Manshee's directors put their future in order of priority.
- The directors first focused on and financial goals
- What the speaker feels was particularly valuable was the of the consultants' advice
- Manshee classifies its customers on the basis of the r.....
- The most successful division is the one working with the sector

PART TWO

Questions 13-22

- You will hear five different people talking about problems and responses to them in the companies where they work.
- For each extract there are two tasks. For Task One, decide which problem each speaker mentions from the list A-H. For Task Two, decide which response the company made to the problem from the list A-H
- After you have listened once, replay the recording.

Task One - Problems

- For questions 13-17, match the extracts with the problems, listed A-H.
- For each extract, decide which problem for the company is mentioned.
- Write one letter (A-H) next to the number of the extract.

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 13 | A The directors' experience was narrow |
| 14 | B Certain products went out of fashion. |
| 15 | C There was a reliance on poor-quality supplies. |
| 16 | D There were conflicts between directors. |
| 17 | E Too many new products were launched at the same time. |
| | F Reasons for previous success were misunderstood. |
| | G There was a failure to understand economic trends. |
| | H Some advisors made poor recommendations. |

Task Two - Responses

- For questions 18-22, match the extracts with the responses, listed A-H.
- For each extract, decide which response the company made to the problem.
- Write one letter (A-H) next to the number of the extract.

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 18 | A Large severance payments were made. |
| 19 | B New shares were issued. |
| 20 | C A takeover bid was accepted. |
| 21 | D Low-cost products were introduced. |
| 22 | E A partnership abroad was formed. |
| | F One division was sold off. |
| | G Some products were rebranded |
| | H A cost reduction programme was introduced. |

PART THREE

Questions 23–30

- You will hear a discussion between two senior managers, John and Deborah, about an assistant manager, Colin, who has applied for a new post.
- For each question (23–30), mark one letter (A, B or C) for the correct answer.
- After you have listened once, replay the recording.

23 The new post is being created as a result of

- A plans to change corporate culture
- B criticisms of management practice
- C changes to overall company structure.

24 What reason has Colin given for applying?

- A to have a more challenging role
- B to make full use of his qualifications
- C to raise his profile within the company

25 John was particularly impressed by the way Colin

- A treated a dissatisfied client.
- B responded to an unreliable supplier.
- C dealt with an inefficient member of staff.

26 What current strength of Colin's does Deborah commend?

- A his analytical skills
- B his product knowledge
- C his flexible approach

27 On a recent sales trip, Colin succeeded in

- A improving the terms of a contract.
- B identifying a new method of selling
- C making a number of new contacts.

28 In what area did Colin excel during recent training?

- A teamworking
- B report writing
- C prioritising

29 What does Colin's reference say?

- A He expects too much of others
- B His confidence will grow in time.
- C He sometimes lacks objectivity

30 What support will the successful candidate receive?

- A contact with an in-house advisory body
- B performance appraisal meetings
- C coaching from a consultant

That is the end of the Listening test. You now have ten minutes to transfer your answers to your Answer Sheet.

SPEAKING 16 minutes

SAMPLE SPEAKING TASKS

PART ONE

In this part, the interlocutor asks questions to each of the candidates in turn. You have to give information about yourself and express personal opinions.

PART TWO

In this part of the test, you are asked to give a short talk on a business topic. You have to choose one of the topics from the three below and then talk for about one minute. You have one minute to prepare your ideas.

- A Customer relations:** the importance to a company of reliable customer opinions of products
- B Staff development:** the importance to a company of developing effective career plans for staff
- C Business strategy:** how to maintain the confidence of company shareholders

PART THREE

In this part of the test, you are given a discussion topic. You have 30 seconds to look at the task prompt, an example of which is below, and then about three minutes to discuss the topic with your partner. After that, the examiner will ask you more questions related to the topic.

For two candidates

Travelling to Work

Your company's location in a busy city centre means that staff often complain about the time taken to get to work. You have been asked to make some recommendations.

Discuss and decide together:

- whether it would be better for staff to use public or private transport
- what the effects might be of allowing staff to work flexible hours.

For three candidates

Travelling to Work

Your company's location in a busy city centre means that staff often complain about the time taken to get to work. You have been asked to make some recommendations.

Discuss and decide together:

- whether it would be better for staff to use public or private transport
- what the effects might be of allowing staff to work flexible hours
- what other measures the company could take to deal with the situation.

Follow-on questions

- Would you be willing to spend a long time travelling to work every day? (Why?/Why not?)
- Should companies provide staff with financial assistance if they have long journeys to work? (Why?/Why not?)
- What do you think influences a company's decision to be located in a busy city centre? (Why?)
- What effect do you think technology will have in the future on where people do their work? (Why?)
- What could be the long-term effects of changes in the hours people work and where they work? (Why?)

READING 1 hour

PART ONE

Questions 1-8

- Look at the statements below and at the five extracts on the opposite page from an article about how employees are motivated.
- Which section of the article (A, B, C, D or E) does each statement (1-8) refer to?
- For each statement (1-8), mark one letter (A, B, C, D or E) on your Answer Sheet.
- You will need to use some of these letters more than once.
- There is an example at the beginning. (0).

Example:

- 0 One of the biggest difficulties that managers face is motivating staff.

0	A	B	C	D	E
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

- People may perceive the same type of work very differently.
- It is important that staff gain recognition for what they have done.
- The behaviour of staff may be influenced by disappointment with what their organisation provides.
- Traditional ways of motivating staff cannot be put into practice these days.
- A good salary alone is no longer enough to motivate staff.
- It is desirable for staff and their employers to have similar objectives.
- Staff should be able to improve their abilities through their work.
- Not all companies see a need to find out what motivates their staff.

A

Ensuring employees arrive at work geared up and ready to give their all is a major challenge facing managers today. It used to be so easy. A fat pay cheque and the promise of promotion was all that was needed to keep people committed, loyal and happy. But the world of work has changed, and nowadays, organisations cannot rely on the corporate cheque book to give them the edge. Numerous employee surveys have shown that although pay still makes people tick, a whole raft of other issues have entered the motivation equation.

B

One of the problems is that managers often don't appreciate they are playing in a completely new ball game, and a reliance on old-style motivational techniques just won't work in today's technology-driven, fast-paced business environment. For example, an employee could be working in South Africa, with a boss sitting in London and the main client they are dealing with based in Asia. So for someone who is very motivated by face-to-face contact and a collegiate environment, that could be a huge problem.

C

What most employees expect is the chance to work flexibly, on interesting and stimulating tasks that give them the opportunity to develop their skills and talents. Managers on the ground may not always be able to influence pay and working practices – but, if they are to extract top performance from their teams, they need to know how to press the right buttons and create a culture that will inspire their workforce, a culture in which achievement is acknowledged and people feel valued.

D

Organisations should focus on asking people what they want – a relatively simple task that is too often considered unnecessary. However, questions about motivation have to be asked skilfully, or you won't get to the bottom of what really makes people go that extra mile. Two people may both say they want an interesting and stimulating job, but have widely divergent ideas of what would constitute such a position: a city trader would probably find business consultancy boring, and a consultant might be scared by the city trader's job, but both may be very satisfied with their own job.

E

There are huge gaps between what employees expect from employers and what they actually get. For instance, employers' emphasis on employability (equipping workers with 'marketable' skills) may be somewhat misguided. One study showed that what people really wanted was not employability but job security. As a result, employees had the feeling that their employer wasn't delivering, which had a detrimental effect on the employees' workplace performance and attitudes. The problem lies partly in a lack of communication to ensure mutual understanding and to align employees' values and goals with those of the organisation, much more conversation is needed.

PART TWO

Questions 9-14

- Read this introduction to an article about an approach to management.
- Choose the best sentence from the opposite page to fill each of the gaps.
- For each gap (9-14), mark one letter (A-H) on your Answer Sheet
- Do not use any letter more than once.
- There is an example at the beginning. (0).

Introducing T-shaped management

Despite their best efforts, most companies continue to squander what may be their greatest asset in today's knowledge economy (9). . . . This seems a great shame, because capitalising on those intellectual resources - using existing knowledge to improve performance or combining strands of knowledge to create something altogether new - can help companies respond to a surprising array of challenges, from fending off smaller, nimbler rivals to integrating businesses that have been forced together in a merger.

(9) . . . I suggest another approach, one that requires managers to change their behaviour and the way they spend their time. The approach is novel but, when properly implemented, quite powerful. I call it T-shaped management.

T-shaped management relies on a new kind of executive, one who breaks out of the traditional corporate hierarchy to share knowledge freely across the organisation (the horizontal part of the T) while remaining fiercely committed to individual business unit performance (the vertical part). (10) Although this tension is most acute for heads of business units, any T-shaped manager with operating unit obligations must wrestle with it.

You might ask, why rely so heavily on managers to share knowledge? Why not just institute a state-of-the-art knowledge management system? The trouble is that those systems are best

at transferring explicit knowledge, for example, the template needed to perform a complicated but routine task. (11) In fact, this implicit knowledge sharing is crucial to the success of innovation-driven companies. Furthermore, merely moving documents around can never engender the degree of collaboration that is needed to generate new insights. (12) . . .

Effective T-shaped managers will benefit companies of almost any size, but they're particularly crucial in large corporations where operating units have been granted considerable autonomy. Although giving business units greater freedom generally increases accountability and spurs innovation, it can also lead to competition between units, which may hoard, rather than share, expertise. (13) . . .

So how do you successfully cultivate T-shaped managers and capitalise on the value they can create? Energy giant BP Amoco provides some provocative answers. My in-depth examination of their management practices highlighted five specific types of value that T-shaped managers can generate. (14) It is important to follow these, because the benefits of T-shaped management will not be realised if the concept is poorly implemented. Senior executives must put in place mechanisms that simultaneously promote and discipline managers' knowledge-sharing activities.

Example:

0	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- A** However, direct personal contact is more typically needed to effectively transfer the kind of knowledge that must be creatively applied to particular business problems or opportunities.
- B** For that, companies really have to bring people together to brainstorm.
- C** Many companies have tried, with mixed success, to leverage this underused asset by centralising knowledge management functions or by investing heavily in knowledge management technology.
- D** The entire history of the T-shaped manager is one of evolution, a process that continues to this day.
- E** The successful T-shaped manager must learn to live with, and ultimately thrive within, the stress created by this dual responsibility.
- F** By encouraging collaboration, a T-shaped management system can be a powerful counterbalance to such negative behaviour.
- G** Their experience also suggests guidelines for creating an environment in which T-shaped managers will flourish.
- H** I am referring to the wealth of expertise, ideas and latent insights that lie scattered across or deeply embedded in their organisations.

PART THREE

Questions 15–20

- Read the following article about marketing and ethics and the questions on the opposite page
- For each question (15–20), mark one letter (A, B, C or D) on your Answer Sheet.

Corporate social responsibility and sustainability are ethical choices that companies make about how they do business. Current thinking indicates that, as a society, we are beginning to appreciate more fully that there must be limits to our consumption of natural resources, and that business activities must take greater account of this impact on society and economies, as well as the environment in which we live. It is well documented that the corporate sector is in a position of unparalleled dominance and that the global resources of a rising number of multinational companies dwarf many of the national economies in which they operate.

Market liberalisation and privatisation have created new global markets and extended the role of the private sector in public services and civil infrastructure projects. As a result, businesses are now heavily involved in public policy issues throughout the world. For these reasons, businesses must be accountable – not just to shareholders but to consumers, employees and other stakeholders. This means that as corporations continue to grow in power, their responsibility grows too. Increasing the number of ethical considerations they must face. Companies who ignore this development will increasingly find themselves challenged by different groups of stakeholders.

questioning the values and practices of businesses

These issues present major challenges for the role of marketing, and an opportunity for a timely response for individual marketers to consider what this means in their day-to-day work. Marketing is the guardian of the brand, so a company's marketing team must be able to take account of how social and cultural changes impact on the health of the brand. How is this to be addressed by marketers? How widely does marketing engage with the company's stakeholders? A more holistic, inclusive approach across the business is required to safeguard the brand's intangible assets of trust, goodwill and long-term value to the business. Marketers may aim to establish whether they can connect with customers in a way that extends the marketer's role beyond merely communicating the offer to prospective buyers. Marketing's role would well come to be seen more broadly in terms of connecting with stakeholders not only in terms of value, but values.

In a world where intangible assets and corporate reputation are critical components of corporate success, it is inevitable that these newer approaches to marketing are becoming involved with ethics and sustainability issues. It means that marketers can enjoy new opportunities to add value to brands. There

are tangible benefits to be gained in product development, innovation and competitive advantage when broader sustainability and ethical considerations are taken into account.

But if marketing is about selling more and sustainability is about consuming fewer resources and producing less pollution, how on earth are marketers supposed to pursue both goals at the same time? Perhaps it's easy to overestimate the depth and scale of the opposition between these goals and to underestimate the degree to which marketers can align traditional corporate objectives with those of ethics and sustainability. Marketing's core role is to align what the business produces to what the market wants – the route to increased sales.

It all means that the firm must invest money, people and resources only in the things that add value for customers. It requires the business not to waste any effort, money or resources doing things that don't add value for users. Responsible marketing, in other words, is actually all about helping business avoid and eliminate waste as well as continuing to manage natural or man-made resources. It is an important role for marketers and one that has not been fully recognised or appreciated in terms of potential to create innovative solutions.

- 15 What change does the first paragraph mention?
- a decrease in the size of certain economies
 - a growth in knowledge of how resources affect economies
 - a decrease in the resources available to companies
 - a growth in the number of choices available to companies
- 16 According to the second paragraph, businesses are now encountering
- a wider range of obligations
 - greater public criticism
 - problems they should have foreseen.
 - an increase in internal disagreement.
- 17 In the third paragraph, it is suggested that marketers
- should devise stricter social and financial categories.
 - need to attract new categories of customers.
 - should have a greater input in the design of products.
 - need to expand their areas of activity.
- 18 What development is mentioned in the fourth paragraph?
- Product design is becoming secondary to ethical considerations.
 - A company's reputation is growing in importance over its brands.
 - Ethical considerations can lead to effective innovation.
 - Competitiveness is becoming harder to maintain over time.
- 19 What comment is made in the fifth paragraph?
- The challenge facing marketing may be impossible in the long term.
 - Marketing activity should move away from traditional goals.
 - Conflicts confronting marketing may be less extreme than expected.
 - Marketing should focus on promoting goods which last longer.
- 20 According to the final paragraph, businesses now need to
- revise certain aspects of their activity.
 - conduct research into the efficient use of man-made resources.
 - ensure their range of investments is ethical.
 - communicate new sets of values to customers.

PART FOUR

Questions 21–30

- Read the article below about work and leisure.
- Choose the correct word to fill each gap from **A, B, C** or **D** on the opposite page.
- For each question (21–30), mark one letter (**A, B, C** or **D**) on your Answer Sheet.
- There is an example at the beginning. (0)

Leisure Time

There are some people who really do live for their work and (0) totally fulfilled lives with this as their only or main focus. Are you one of them? If not, are you (21) enough attention to your need for time away from work?

There are two big problems here. One is finding a job that does not involve excessive hours, a job where you are still (22) seriously even if you don't frequently work late. The other is deciding how you want to spend your leisure time. If circumstances are conspiring to squeeze that last bit of precious (23) time out of your week, then (24) on to some time, even one hour a week, as sacred. Build it into your diary and never let anyone (25) you out of it. Even if it means doing an extra hour earlier in the week, it's worth it.

Another (26) is to try to change the status quo. It is often middle management who want to see us at our desks 24 hours a day. (27) of output, whereas more objective senior managers may (28) that going home on time is a more productive long term strategy. Perhaps it's time for us to (29) a stand. Even if, in the short term, we cannot work fewer hours and so cannot find the leisure time we need, then at least we can bear it in (30) as an aim for the future.

Example:

A lead B conduct C drive D guide

0	A	B	C	D
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 21 A setting B paying C putting D holding
 22 A dealt B received C handled D taken
 23 A lone B single C individual D personal
 24 A hang B grip C lean D sit
 25 A convince B tell C talk D converse
 26 A lane B street C avenue D alley
 27 A thoughtless B regardless C uncaring D unconcerned
 28 A accept B view C support D approve
 29 A give B bring C place D make
 30 A opinion B idea C mind D memory

PART FIVE

Questions 31–40

- Read the article below about people who buy clothes as an investment.
- For each question (31–40), write one word in CAPITAL LETTERS on your Answer Sheet.
- There is an example at the beginning, (0).

Example: 0 W H O S F

The Rag Trade

There is one kind of clothes shopper (0) selections never leave the bag they come in. They know exactly what they want and they go in and get it, often buying in bulk, and often with little regard for (31) this latest fashion even fits them. These are the fashion investors, and they are out to make money. Once, the only way to profit from fashion as a collectable item was to buy rare, vintage or antique garments (32) mint condition – an expensive business and still (33) which offers relatively risky returns. The modern way has collectors buying more mainstream fashion items that are in the shops now, in (34) knowledge that they will appreciate considerably over just a (35) years. The returns on fashion investments are not always massive, although estimates of a four hundred per cent return are (36) uncommon. Certainly they are considerably better than the return offered by a high interest savings account and, (37) those who are experts, better than the stock market. The knowledge necessary for fashion investing means investors invariably work in the fashion industry. They often know (38) is going to catch on before the fashion press does and they know where and through whom products can be bought. They can spot what is disposable high fashion now but will (39) on to become a classic of its time in years to come, worth far more than they laid (40) for it originally

PART SIX

Questions 41–52

- Read the text below from a brochure for a company that rents out office space.
- In most of the lines (41–52) there is one extra word. It is either grammatically incorrect or does not fit in with the sense of the text. Some lines, however, are correct.
- If a line is correct, write **CORRECT** on your Answer Sheet.
- If there is an extra word in the line, write the **extra word** in CAPITAL LETTERS on your Answer Sheet.
- The exercise begins with two examples, (0) and (00).

Examples: 0 F O R ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
00 C O R R E C T ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

REGUS INSTANT OFFICES

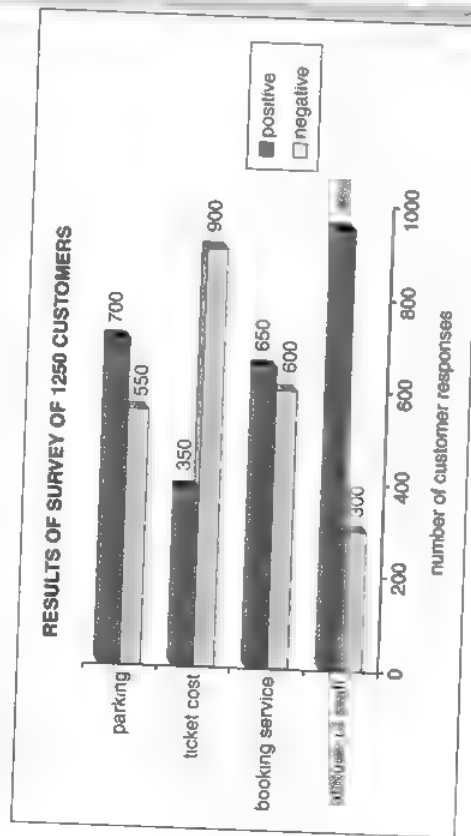
- 0 Regus offers for immediately available, fully-furnished, serviced offices in a growing number of locations worldwide. We bring together people, property and technology to provide a platform for doing the business on flexible terms wherever, and whenever, you do require. You can hire an office for a day, a week, a month, a year or however long you need them to. You can do it as easily as you would book a hotel or rent a car, and, with our management skills, you can be assured of such consistent quality. Increased demand is continually driving us to open new centres. Our aim is to provide you a world-class business service which is a driving force in changing the way people work. Regus centres can be found out in prominent, convenient locations throughout the world. In each centre contains a range of facilities, including serviced offices, meeting rooms, reception areas, altogether with coffee/tea points and cybercafés. Everything is there of the highest standard.
- 52 In addition to being fully furnished and equipped up, each centre is staffed with a professional service team ready to assist you.

WRITING 1 hour 10 minutes

PART ONE

Question 1

- The chart below shows the distribution of positive and negative responses given in a market survey about service provision at a leisure centre.
- Using the information from the chart, write a short report about the results of the market survey, describing customer reactions to the services provided.
- Write 120–140 words.



PART TWO

Write an answer to **one** of the questions 2–4 in this part. Write your answer in 200–250 words.

Question 2

- Your company recently sponsored a national event for the first time and your manager has asked you to write a report on this.
- Write your **report** for your manager, including the following information:
 - a brief description of the event
 - which aspects of the event were particularly successful and why
 - the benefits to the company of sponsoring the event
 - what needs to be done before considering further sponsorship.

Question 3

- Your company has recently been taken over by another company, and your department has been restructured. This has resulted in a number of problems which you want to make the new owners aware of.
- Write a **letter** to the Managing Director of the new owners:
 - outlining what the situation in your department was before the takeover
 - explaining what problems have arisen and why
 - suggesting how these problems could be resolved
 - warning what might happen if these problems are not resolved.

Question 4

- Your company's export sales have been falling and the Sales Manager has asked you to consider ways of improving them.
- Write your **proposal** for the Sales Manager:
 - giving reasons for the decline in the company's export sales
 - suggesting ways of improving export sales
 - outlining the additional resources that would be required.

LISTENING

Approximately 40 minutes (including 10 minutes' transfer time)

PART ONE

Questions 1-12

- You will hear the opening of the Factories of the Year awards ceremony.
- As you listen, for questions 1-12, complete the notes, using up to three words or a number
- After you have listened once, replay the recording.

Notes on selection procedure

Panel of judges:

- head of panel, Jacqueline Allen, teaches (1) *at Runcorn High School*

Selection process: first stage

- a questionnaire that was (2) *long*

Measurable performance criteria included:

- length of (3) *which affect productivity*
- success in achieving reliable (4) *times*

Less tangible performance criteria included:

- importance of (5) *how well companies deal with (6)*

Selection process: second stage

- judges compiled a (7) *of factories to visit*

Standard characteristics of winning factories included:

- effective procedures in the area of (8) *management*
- determination to be the best
- innovations that help to achieve the factory's (9) *to assist personnel and visitors in finding their way*

New characteristics of winning factories:

- excellence at (10) *tracking flow of production, e.g. by using (12)*
- provision of (11) *management*

PART TWO

Questions 13-22

- You will hear five different people talking about visiting trade fairs.
- For each extract there are two tasks. For Task One, choose the person's intention in visiting the fair from the list A-H. For Task Two, choose the experience at the fair that each person mentions from the list A-H
- After you have listened once, replay the recording.

Task One - Intention in visiting the fair

- For questions 13-17, match the extracts with the intentions, listed A-H
- For each extract, choose the person's intention in visiting the fair.
- Write one letter (A-H) next to the number of the extract.

- 13 **A** to get ideas for potential new products
- 14 **B** to give a presentation
- 15 **C** to seek alternative employment
- 16 **D** to find out about competitors' products
- 17 **E** to get new marketing ideas
- 18 **F** to give product demonstrations
- 19 **G** to recruit a new overseas agent
- 20 **H** to find alternative suppliers

Task Two - Experience at the fair

- For questions 18-22, match the extracts with the experiences, listed A-H.
- For each extract, choose the experience at the fair that each person mentions.
- Write one letter (A-H) next to the number of the extract.

- 18 **A** I thought of a way of cutting costs.
- 19 **B** I was impressed by some publicity material.
- 20 **C** I saw a new way of applying technology.
- 21 **D** I was pleased by some sales figures.
- 22 **E** I noticed some export opportunities.
- 23 **F** I was impressed by a competitor's product.
- 24 **G** I saw someone demonstrating an effective selling technique.
- 25 **H** I thought of ways of improving an important product we make

PART THREE

Questions 23–30

- You will hear an interview with Steve Marriott, an internal business consultant with Carserve, a vehicle breakdown service.
- For each question (23–30), mark one letter (A, B or C) for the correct answer.
- After you have listened once, replay the recording.

- 23 According to Steve Marriott, what problem do some of Carserve's remote workers have?
- A They think that they do not receive enough company information.
 B They want a greater amount of informal contact with colleagues.
 C They feel uncomfortable without a separate office base.
- 24 According to Steve, some staff believe that
- A they need to prove that they are working hard.
 B their breaks should be taken at intervals.
 C the support they receive from management is inadequate.
- 25 In Steve's opinion, what was the underlying management problem when he joined Carserve?
- A There was confusion about who gave orders.
 B Objectives were not made clear to staff.
 C Long-term planning was not carried out.
- 26 Steve improved the situation at Carserve by
- A introducing regular work meetings.
 B encouraging managers to trust staff.
 C modifying the system of supervision.
- 27 Why have Carserve's teams become more effective?
- A Distance has forced them to become more organised.
 B They are expected to make decisions quickly.
 C Their meetings have become more frequent.

- 28 What does Steve Marriott say about staff contacting managers?
- A Managers sometimes fail to respond promptly.
 B Managers don't want to be disturbed in their work.
 C Staff may be uncertain about when it is appropriate to do so.
- 29 How have managers been affected by the change to remote working?
- A They now have to deal with employees' personal problems
 B They now have to assess staff more regularly.
 C They now spend more time travelling than talking to staff.
- 30 To help managers, Carserve is planning training on the subject of
- A making the best use of technology.
 B organising remote teams.
 C reducing managerial control.

That is the end of the Listening test. You now have ten minutes to transfer your answers to your Answer Sheet.

SPEAKING 16 minutes**SAMPLE SPEAKING TASKS****PART ONE**

In this part, the interlocutor asks questions to each of the candidates in turn. You have to give information about yourself and express personal opinions.

PART TWO

In this part of the test, you are asked to give a short talk on a business topic. You have to choose one of the topics from the three below and then talk for about one minute. You have one minute to prepare your ideas.

- A Quality control:** the importance to a company of monitoring the quality of its goods and services
- B Information management:** how to ensure that information is managed effectively within a company
- C Financial planning:** the factors involved in deciding on appropriate pricing strategies

PART THREE

In this part of the test, you are given a discussion topic. You have 30 seconds to look at the task prompt, an example of which is below, and then about three minutes to discuss the topic with your partner. After that, the examiner will ask you more questions related to the topic.

For two candidates

Team Building

The company you work for is about to take over another company and is keen to encourage staff from both companies to work together effectively. You have been asked to prepare a proposal for team building.

Discuss and decide together

- what kinds of work projects and leisure activities would be suitable to encourage teamwork
- what benefits effective teamwork could bring to the company

52

For three candidates

Team Building

The company you work for is about to take over another company and is keen to encourage staff from both companies to work together effectively. You have been asked to prepare a proposal for team building.

Discuss and decide together:

- what arrangements should be made before new colleagues start working together
- what kinds of work projects and leisure activities would be suitable to encourage teamwork
- what benefits effective teamwork could bring to the company

Follow-on questions

- What benefits do you think individual employees get from working in a strong team? (Why?/Why not?)
- What do you think is the ideal number of people to work in a team? (Why?)
- Do you think a company needs individualists as well as team workers? (Why?/Why not?)
- Do you think it is the responsibility of the company or each employee to make sure people work well together? (Why?/Why not?)
- How far should team building be taken into account when making long-term plans for a company? (Why?/Why not?)

53

Test 3

READING

1 hour

PART ONE

Questions 1-8

- Look at the statements below and at the five extracts on the opposite page from the annual reports of five mobile phone companies.
- Which company (A, B, C, D or E) does each statement (1-8) refer to?
- For each statement (1-8), mark one letter (A, B, C, D or E) on your Answer Sheet.
- You will need to use some of these letters more than once.
- There is an example at the beginning. (0)

Example:

- 0 This company has no direct competition.

0	A	B	C	D	E
---	---	---	---	---	---

- This company is still making a financial loss.
- This company is having part of its business handled by an outside agency.
- This company has grown without undue expense.
- This company is trying to find out what the market response will be to a new product.
- This company continues to lose customers.
- This company aims to target a specific group of consumers.
- This company is finding it less expensive than before to attract new customers.
- This company has rationalised its outlets.

54

A

Our management team is dedicated to delivering operational excellence and improved profitability in the coming year, we will focus our marketing on professional young adults, who represent the high value segment of the market and who according to independent research are most likely to adopt our more advanced mobile data products. Customer retention is central to our strategy, and we have been successful in reversing the customer loss of recent years by loyalty and upgrade schemes. A restructuring programme, resulting from changing marketing conditions, has seen our workforce scaled down to 6,100 people

B

As the only network operator in the country, our marketing is aimed at expanding the size of the market in the business sector, we have targeted small and medium-sized businesses by offering standardised services, and large customers by offering tailored telecommunications solutions. We have been at the forefront of introducing new telecommunications technology and services and have recently distributed 150 of our most advanced handsets to customers to assess the likely demand for advanced data services. Last year, the industry recognised our achievement when we won a national award for technological progress.

C

A new management team has driven our improved performance here. It is committed to bringing the business into profitability within three years after reaching break-even point in the next financial year. We are focused on delivering rising levels of customer service and an improvement in the quality and utilisation of our network. Good progress has been made on all these fronts. The cost of acquiring new subscribers has been reduced and new tariffs have been introduced to encourage greater use of the phone in the late evening

D

We have continued to expand our network in a cost-efficient manner and have consolidated our retail section by combining our four wholly-owned retail businesses into a single operating unit. We expect this to enhance our operational effectiveness and the consistency of our service. Our ambition is to give customers the best retail experience possible. We were, therefore, delighted earlier this year when we won a major European award for customer service. This was particularly pleasing to us as we have always given high priority to customer satisfaction and operational excellence

E

Here we are focused on continuously realising cost efficiencies as well as improving the level of customer satisfaction and retention. We have already taken effective measures to reduce customer loss and to strengthen our delivery of customer service. The quality of our network has improved significantly over the past year and an increase in the utilisation of our network is now a priority. The operation of our customer service centre has been outsourced to a call centre specialist and this has led to a substantial increase in the level of service

55

PART TWO

Questions 9-14

- Read this text taken from an article about the importance to companies of not losing their employees' knowledge.
- Choose the best sentence from the opposite page to fill each of the gaps.
- For each gap (9-14), mark one letter (A-H) on your Answer Sheet.
- Do not use any letter more than once.
- There is an example at the beginning, (0).

Example:

0	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- A** Organisations that reward people for sharing knowledge will know who falls into each of these two opposing categories.
- B** This approach enables them to identify those with a limited number of network relationships.
- C** Launching a knowledge-sharing initiative at a time when people are expecting redundancies would not be a good idea.
- D** This provides evidence of the risk that such a policy will meet resistance.
- E** Because of the difficulty of achieving this, it is far better not to lose the valuable sources of knowledge at all categories.
- F** But a 'knowledge mapping' exercise might reveal that they play a critical role as mentors to the rest of the team.
- G** The price may be an increase in their redundancy package, provision of career counselling, or an agreement to hire them back as consultants.
- H** When companies feel they're in a crisis, it is one of the things that goes by the board.

Protecting the corporate memory

Many companies risk losing expertise through job cuts. But by analysing how staff interact, they may be able to minimise the damage.

Many staff have knowledge which is essential to their company. So what can businesses do to avoid losing that expertise when staff leave, and to dissuade employees from keeping their knowledge to themselves in the face of possible job cuts?

First they need to recognise the problem. A downturn in the economy exposes many companies' lack of commitment to understanding and using their people's knowledge (9) - H... Unless that is they've made it a routine or suffered because of losing knowledge in the past.

Next, any attempt to stop knowledge walking out of the door must be handled sensitively (9) Employees would be extremely cynical and see it as an attempt to extract their unique knowledge, which they believe gives them job security.

Strong incentives are needed to coax people into divulging their expertise when being dismissed (10) ... At first sight, this might seem excessive, but the disadvantages should be weighed against the benefits.

Of course, not all knowledge can be captured by the organisation and turned into a process. (11) To find out who these 'knowledge hotspots' are, companies need to question their

staff and analyse their social networks. Companies shouldn't ask employees what they know, but who they would ask if they wanted to know about different subjects (12) And, more importantly, the process reveals the others who always know somebody who knows.

The latter can be high on the list for redundancy because managers are unsure what they do, or because they appear to be weak performers (13) People like this are often not ambitious but they can hold a company together. The most valuable knowledge is often not possessed by the people who seem to be star performers.

If those at the centre of 'knowledge networks' come to be seen as the most valuable people, those who keep their knowledge to themselves will look vulnerable when downsizing is deemed necessary (14) In such companies, the incentive to share knowledge should be even greater when jobs are under threat.

For some companies, it may be too late to salvage important knowledge. Building a culture where knowledge is understood, valued and shared can take a long time. Now may be the time to prepare for the next downturn.

PART THREE

Questions 15-20

- Read the following article about 'Go-Fast', a cost saving programme introduced by the car manufacturer General Motors, and the questions on the opposite page.
- For each question (15-20), mark one letter (A, B, C or D) on your Answer Sheet.

Somewhere today, a group of staff from General Motors will meet as part of the 'Go-Fast' programme, and hammer out a new initiative to cut costs and bureaucracy. They may focus only on wiping-blades, or staff appraisal, or showroom design. But by this afternoon, there should be an outline savings plan, which will, when implemented, be measured carefully for signs of success. The aim is to transform GM from a lumbering leviathan into the corporate equivalent of a sports car. The intention is not just to be big - GM is one of the biggest car manufacturers in the world - but to be fast, particularly in its responsiveness to the market. The success of the programme is reflected in the large number of suggestions being introduced - far more than in the old days, when every change had to come from senior managers focusing on the 'big picture'.

The progress made has transformed investor perceptions of GM. Before the Go-Fast programme was introduced, the conventional wisdom was that GM's market share was in permanent free fall and its organisation incapable of doing anything about it. Now, the decline has been turned around, and the senior managers' change of approach has led to the company being energised with a

winning spirit that has unlocked long-dormant capabilities. That it took a firm of consultants to help devise the programme is perhaps a sad reflection of the danger of corporate thinking becoming inflexible.

The shareholders' support of GM's strategy to become more outward-looking and innovative is something of a luxury, though in the long run success would convince even the most sceptical shareholder. The strategy includes bearing down on costs and extracting maximum synergies from GM's numerous alliance partners, such as its tooling suppliers, and exchanging ideas and management tools with other corporations of widely differing sizes, sectors and nationalities. Having such input is one thing, but its value would be undermined without a coherent mechanism to put ideas into practice, and this is where the consultants proved invaluable.

In the car industry, however, there was plenty of scepticism about the programme when it was first announced, with many convinced that only much smaller organisations stood a reasonable chance of making such a transformation, particularly when it involved changes to the company culture. Surprisingly, perhaps, this fear

was not shared by the consultants who helped senior management to design the programme and, crucially, effect a change in leadership skills, rather they were more concerned about the impact that pockets of opposition within GM might have.

The results of the scheme so far give rise to cautious optimism. No aspect of GM's work can hide from scrutiny, and initial fears of a lack of 'joined-up thinking' about the impact of one change on other areas soon dissipated, as the 'leadership panels' responsible for approving and implementing changes took a broader view. But while internal management has improved dramatically, many analysts are sceptical that the initiatives can outweigh GM's mounting pension obligations.

The company is still suffering the effects of poor decisions in the past, such as the choice of certain alliance partnerships, and a major change of strategy might be necessary to recover from these. If this were to take place, the company's core car manufacturing would need to be much more firmly rooted than it is at present, to ensure it didn't suffer from lack of focus. However, the architects of the scheme are confident that GM will be far more outward looking and innovative in the near future.

15 What point is made in the first paragraph about GM's 'Go-Fast' programme?

- A The intention behind it is to increase GM's market share.
- B Suggestions need to be agreed by senior managers.
- C All areas of business are examined for possible improvements.
- D Senior managers are excluded from the initial discussions.

16 In the second paragraph, the writer regards it as positive that

- A the programme allows improvements to come from within.
- B certain senior managers have left the company and been replaced
- C the consultants developed the ideas on the basis of company proposals
- D investors' continued confidence in the company has been justified

17 In the third paragraph, the writer claims that the 'Go-Fast' process is successful because of

- A the company's alliances with many business partners
- B the method of implementing changes.
- C the positive attitude of investors.
- D the exchange of management thinking with other companies.

18 When starting to set up the programme, the consultants expected that

- A the size of the company might make it difficult to introduce changes
- B senior managers might be unwilling to change their work style.
- C it might be difficult to change the company culture
- D some of the workforce might resist the changes.

19 What concern is expressed in the last paragraph about the 'Go-Fast' programme?

- A It may not save enough to meet the company's financial demands.
- B Management is being distracted from the company's core activities.
- C It has led the company to make unwise strategic decisions.
- D The company is focusing on changes in the wrong areas.

20 What would be the best title for the article?

- A Improving internal and external communications
- B Choosing the most suitable consultants
- C Making a company more adaptable
- D Changing a company's management structure

PART FOUR

Questions 21–30

- Read the text below about leadership
- Choose the correct word to fill each gap from **A, B, C or D** on the opposite page.
- For each question (21–30), mark one letter (**A, B, C or D**) on your Answer Sheet
- There is an example at the beginning, (0).

Leadership

Leadership is the heart of the managerial process, because it (0) initiating action. Other terms identifying the same idea are directing, executing, supervising, ordering, and guiding. Whatever term is used, the idea is to (21) into effect the decisions, plans, and programs that have previously been worked (22) ... for achieving the goals of the group

Leadership concerns the overall (23) in which a manager influences the actions of subordinates. First, it includes the (24) ... of orders that are clear, comprehensive, and within the capabilities of subordinates to accomplish. Second, it implies a continual training activity in which subordinates are given instructions to enable them to (25) ... the particular assignment in the existing situation. Third, it necessarily involves the motivation of workers to try to (26) the expectations of the manager. Fourth, it consists of maintaining discipline and rewarding those who (27) property. In short, leading is the final action of a manager in getting others to act after all preparations have been made

The manager's style of direction depends upon his or her own personal traits and the situation in (28) In leadership, more than any other function, the manager must determine an approach alone, after surveying the (29) that are available. In any event, each manager will (30) ... well to act as an individual, and not to try to act as others act or to proceed according to the textbook

Example:

A involves **B** engages **C** consists **D** contains

0	A	B	C	D
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 21 **A** set **B** place **C** get **D** put
 22 **A** in **B** out **C** over **D** around
 23 **A** manner **B** method **C** means **D** mode
 24 **A** telling **B** issuing **C** committing **D** granting
 25 **A** reach **B** finalise **C** terminate **D** complete
 26 **A** please **B** attain **C** gratify **D** fulfil
 27 **A** achieve **B** exercise **C** perform **D** execute
 28 **A** topic **B** question **C** subject **D** argument
 29 **A** varieties **B** chances **C** options **D** selections
 30 **A** go **B** be **C** do **D** work

PART FIVE

Questions 31–40

- Read the article below about problems of motivation at work.
- For each question (31–40), write one word in CAPITAL LETTERS on your Answer Sheet.
- There is an example at the beginning, (0).

Example: 0 O N F

Regain your motivation

Getting out of bed to go to work is (0) of life's lesser pleasures (31) great the job is, most of us struggle on Monday morning. But when that feeling stretches through the entire week, something deeper may (32) wrong. Sometimes it's tempting to dismiss feelings of boredom or frustration (33) part of working life. But if you're constantly feeling uninterested, you need to ask yourself some questions.

Demotivation isn't just caused by major setbacks, like being passed (34) for promotion, or refused a salary increase, but can be a product of far more subtle aspects. Try to define the most important aspects of your job for you personally – and (35) action if you feel things aren't right. Talk to agencies or headhunters about your skills and find out (36) you're worth on the open market.

It can be all (37) easy to blame your job when you feel demotivated – when it can be just as easy down to you, as Sally Martin, a fundraising manager for a charity, discovered. 'I had started to resent my job, the fact that I had no perks, no chances to travel – (38) from visiting other dingy offices for meetings. But then some friends were talking about how superficial they felt their jobs were, and I suddenly realised I couldn't say that about my job. In fact, I really felt (39) was a point to it. I remembered that's why I'd taken it in the (40) place.'

So remember: always give your old job a chance before starting to search for a new one.

PART SIX

Questions 41–52

- Read the text below about time management
- In most of the lines (41–52) there is one extra word. It is either grammatically incorrect or does not fit in with the sense of the text. Some lines, however, are correct.
- If a line is correct, write **CORRECT** on your Answer Sheet
- If there is an extra word in the line, write the **extra word** in CAPITAL LETTERS on your Answer Sheet.
- The exercise begins with two examples, (0) and (00).

Examples: 0 L J K F
00 C O R P F C T

EFFECTIVE TIME MANAGEMENT

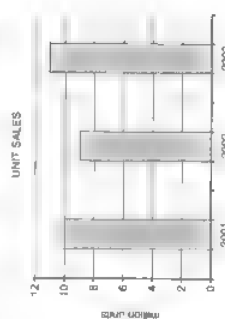
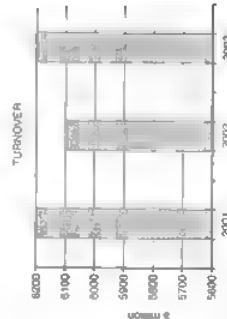
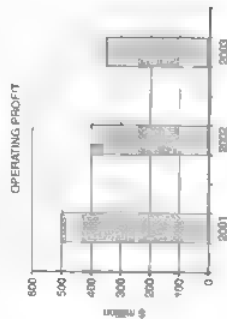
- 0 All too often, work seems like to take over a disproportionate part of our lives, with the result that we are not able to see our friends or families as often as we would like and we have little time for relaxation. Although one of the consequences of poor time management for many of us is that it tips over our lives out of balance so that we don't pay enough attention to the things that are really important to achieve them. But the paradox is that when work dominates on the horizon to such an overwhelming extent, we are probably being neither as efficient nor as effective at work as we could be with a better organised lifestyle. If we constantly feel under the pressure and are always rushing to meet deadlines, we should take up a look at the way we are organising our work. We all have limits on the amount of time and within which we can do a good job; it's more important to make use that time well than to work more hours. There are various techniques, such as delegating to each others and by reducing interruptions, that are commonly used for managing time, and when we put these into practice, we will soon notice the difference.
- 41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52

WRITING 1 hour 10 minutes

PART ONE

Question 1

- The three charts below show a company's operating profit (in \$ million), turnover (in \$ million) and unit sales (i.e. number of products sold) in the three years 2001–2003.
- Using the information from the charts, write a short **report** describing the company's performance in the three years
- Write **120–140** words.



PART TWO

Write an answer to **one** of the questions **2–4** in this part. Write your answer in **200–250** words.

Question 2

- You work for a supermarket chain and have been asked by the board of directors to write a report on a site where the company is considering building a new supermarket.
- Write your **report** for the board, including the following information:
 - a description of the site, including its location
 - the advantages and disadvantages of the site
 - your opinion as to whether the site is suitable.

Question 3

- A company you already do business with has recently created a new product line. Your department placed an order for the new product, but found that the product did not fulfil your requirements and that the after-sales service was poor. Your head of department has asked you to write a letter to the company informing them of your dissatisfaction
- Write your **letter**, including the following information:
 - what the order was for and when it was placed
 - why you are dissatisfied with both the product and the after-sales service
 - a reminder of business done with them in the past
 - what you expect in response to your complaint.

Question 4

- Your company has recently experienced a drop in sales, and your Managing Director has asked you to write a short proposal about improving the advertising of your company's products or services
- Write your **proposal** for the Managing Director:
 - commenting on the effectiveness of the advertising you are currently using
 - recommending one or two changes to your advertising
 - explaining how these changes would affect sales.

LISTENING

Approximately 40 minutes (including 10 minutes' transfer time)

PART ONE

Questions 1-12

- You will hear part of a talk to a group of business students about the role of free gifts in product promotion
- As you listen, for questions 1-12, complete the notes, using up to three words or a number
- After you have listened once, replay the recording.

FREE GIFTS

- Sue Barnard works as a freelance
- One of her clients produces
- Last week she was working in Wales, at a client's
- She noticed that *Prime* magazine was offering a as a gift
- The magazine was contained in a
- The magazine's marketing policy involved carrying out a
- Rival magazines are offering gifts such as a book, a or a
- All the free gifts are being offered in response to increasing
- Magazines can get trapped in what Sue calls a
- Advertising is a more important source of profits for magazines than the
- Free gifts need to reflect the rea
- A gift may increase magazine sales by up to of the magazine

PART TWO

Questions 13-22

- You will hear five different people talking about workshops they have recently attended.
- For each extract there are two tasks. For Task One, choose the aim of the workshop from the list A-H. For Task Two, choose the outcome of the workshop from the list A-H.
- After you have listened once, replay the recording.

Task One - Aim

- For questions 13-17, match the extracts with the aims, listed A-H.
- For each extract, choose the aim of the workshop.
- Write one letter (A-H) next to the number of the extract.

- | | | | |
|----|-------|---|---|
| 13 | ..... | A | to develop marketing strategies |
| 14 | ..... | B | to improve co-operation between two departments |
| 15 | ..... | C | to decide on a programme for reorganising the company |
| 16 | ..... | D | to discuss a takeover bid by another company |
| 17 | ..... | E | to develop managers' interpersonal skills |
| | | F | to suggest ways of increasing profitability |
| | | G | to modify decision-making procedures |
| | | H | to improve teamwork within one department |

Task Two - Outcome

- For questions 18-22, match the extracts with the outcomes, listed A-H.
- For each extract, choose the outcome of the workshop.
- Write one letter (A-H) next to the number of the extract.

- | | | | |
|----|-------|---|--|
| 18 | ..... | A | More information will be passed down regularly. |
| 19 | ..... | B | A topic was chosen for a future training course. |
| 20 | ..... | C | A procedure for dealing with emergencies was introduced. |
| 21 | ..... | D | Staff recruitment will be reduced. |
| 22 | ..... | E | One of the participants decided to leave the company. |
| | | F | A future meeting will review progress. |
| | | G | Senior management was persuaded to reverse a decision. |
| | | H | The company's appraisal system was abolished. |

PART THREE

Questions 23-30

- You will hear a conversation between Suzanne, a personnel manager, and Kevin, her assistant, about recruiting new staff for a new factory.
- For each question (23-30), mark one letter (A, B or C) for the correct answer.
- After you have listened once, replay the recording.

- 23 What do Suzanne and Kevin think will attract staff to the new factory?
- A the possibility of rapid promotion
B the location of the new factory
C the flexible working hours
- 24 When do they hope to begin advertising for staff?
- A when the new factory is almost finished
B before the senior board meeting
C after the holiday period is over
- 25 Who does Kevin suggest should be in charge of the recruitment process?
- A an external consultant
B a person from Head Office
C the manager of the new factory
- 26 Suzanne feels that new staff ought to be people who
- A have the particular skills required.
B have experience in a related industry.
C want to stay in the job for a long time.
- 27 Which existing staff benefit have they decided to abolish at the new factory?
- A the subsidised canteen
B the travel allowance
C the discount on company products

- 28 Which staff are likely to move from Head Office to the new factory?

- A staff who have worked for the company for a long time
B staff who think it will give them more chance of promotion
C staff who have recently completed a training programme

- 29 The company will try to persuade current employees to move by offering them

- A a larger salary
B a bonus scheme.
C a share option

- 30 What will be the purpose of Suzanne and Kevin's next meeting?

- A to agree a timetable for recruitment
B to discuss the contract details for new staff
C to finalise salary levels for the new jobs

That is the end of the Listening test. You now have ten minutes to transfer your answers to your Answer Sheet.

SPEAKING 16 minutes**SAMPLE SPEAKING TASKS****PART ONE**

In this part, the interlocutor asks questions to each of the candidates in turn. You have to give information about yourself and express personal opinions.

PART TWO

In this part of the test, you are asked to give a short talk on a business topic. You have to choose one of the topics from the three below and then talk for about one minute. You have one minute to prepare your ideas.

- A Staff relations** the importance of a company providing a range of facilities for all staff
- B Technology** the importance to a company of regularly upgrading its technological equipment
- C Strategic planning** the factors involved in managing change effectively within an organisation

PART THREE

In this part of the test, you are given a discussion topic. You have 30 seconds to look at the task prompt, an example of which is below, and then about three minutes to discuss the topic with your partner. After that, the examiner will ask you more questions related to the topic.

For **two** candidates

Educational Sponsorship

The company you work for is considering funding a regional educational project for 16 to 18-year-old students interested in following a business course. You have been asked to make recommendations for this scheme.

Discuss and decide together

- how the project could be used to promote the name of the company
- how to monitor the progress and outcomes of the project.

70

For **three** candidates

Educational Sponsorship

The company you work for is considering funding a regional educational project for 16 to 18-year-old students interested in following a business course. You have been asked to make recommendations for this scheme.

Discuss and decide together:

- how the project could be used to promote the name of the company
- what the long-term aims of the project might be
- how to monitor the progress and outcomes of the project.

Follow-on questions

- In what other ways can a company promote its name more widely? (Why?)
- How should companies select young people for educational projects? (Why?/Why not?)
- What do you think are the benefits to young people of taking part in company training projects? (Why?/Why not?)
- Do you think it is important for companies to be involved in educational projects? (Why?/Why not?)
- How important do you think it is to have national training projects for business people? (Why?/Why not?)

71

Test 4

READING 1 hour

PART ONE

Questions 1-8

- Look at the statements below and at the five extracts from a newspaper article on the opposite page about people who have set up their own internet companies.
- Which extract (A, B, C, D or E) does each statement 1-8 refer to?
- For each statement (1-8), mark one letter (A, B, C, D or E) on your Answer Sheet.
- You will need to use some of these letters more than once.
- There is an example at the beginning, (0).

Example:

- 0 These people sought help to forecast their likely cashflow.

0	A	B	C	D	E

- These people have not paid themselves out of their company's income so far.
- These people had knowledge which they wanted to exploit in a different type of company.
- These people's initial efforts to obtain start-up funding were unsuccessful.
- These people have developed a very effective process for handling sales.
- These people devised a mixed media approach to advertising.
- These people felt that they could improve companies' focus on customers.
- These people intend to make their marketing more cost-effective.
- These people are targeting a relatively small number of discerning clients.

72

A

E-GAMES

John and Stephanie both wanted a complete career change. Selling children's games over the internet seemed a foolproof idea, but their biggest challenge was to secure financial backing. First they contacted numerous venture capitalists, but from the response of the few that would even talk to them, they realised they would get nowhere until they had spelt out in detail how they intended to turn their concept into reality. So the next step was to work with a group of start-up consultants, to devise a business plan making their expected revenue streams more precise.

B

SU'REK

Sue and Derek's plan was to sell clothes over the internet. After a shaky start, leading to serious cash flow problems, which meant they occasionally had little to live on, they realised they would have to advertise much more seriously. On the internet, they used online marketing tools to the full to produce increases in traffic, and combined this with intensive publicity outside the internet. Within six months they had built a large customer database, at which stage it was necessary to begin looking for capital to build the business.

C

WONDERWEB

Two senior advertising executives, frustrated with the pace of change in an industry they felt was failing to take advantage of new media, Sally and Sue were keen to translate their advertising and marketing skills into an online environment. To their surprise, they found that many websites seemed to have been developed without taking any account of users' needs. Sure that the opportunity was ripe for a business with a strong marketing proposition, they started offering marketing services to other small online businesses.

D

SU PERGIFTS

Michael and Tony set up a company to sell upmarket gifts, such as glassware and porcelain, online. The niche market they have identified is professional and affluent, a group which their research revealed is increasingly internet literate, is looking for exceptional goods at the right price and has high service expectations. A low-level marketing campaign generated more than 2000 customers, with a high-value average order. The entire system from web order to delivery is proving to be highly successful, with all orders being fulfilled within the advertised five days without any returns or breakages.

E

ABBIE'S

The first phases of the company's growth have been funded through a mix of personal investment, foregone salaries and bank overdraft. The next phase will be crucial. Their biggest challenge will be to distinguish themselves from a plethora of competitive sites, most of which are spending far more than they are. To stand out from the crowd, Paul and Abbie are working to target and reach their audience better, and generate higher sales, but of necessity without increasing their budget. The company's total marketing vision will be the key to success.

73

PART TWO

Questions 9–14

- Read the article below about consumers' attitudes to goods described as 'premium'.
- Choose the best sentence from the opposite page to fill each of the gaps.
- For each gap (9–14), mark one letter (A–H) on your Answer Sheet
- Do not use any letter more than once.
- There is an example at the beginning. (0)

Shoppers wary of 'premium' goods

One of the marketing industry's favourite terms is 'premium' – usually taken to mean 'luxury' or 'top quality'. The ideal is to create a premium car, wristwatch or perfume something that appears to transcend the ordinary (0) . . .

However, manufacturers should take note of a recent survey of shoppers' attitudes to so-called premium goods (9) . . . In fact, the tag seems to have become devalued by overuse.

Consumers of all socio-economic backgrounds are very keen to buy the best – but not all product categories lend themselves to a premium status. 'Premium' can be used in any category where image is paramount, and that includes cars, toiletries, clothes and electronics. (10) . . . Banking and insurance are typical of this second group.

More than 70 per cent of consumers interviewed in the survey said that a premium tag on everyday items such as coffee or soap is an excuse to charge extra for products that don't always have extra benefits. (11) . . . The prevalence of such a suspicious attitude makes life hard for the marketers

While the word 'luxury' had a clear and definable meaning among respondents – most related it to cars – 'premium' was found to be harder to define. Oddly, the only category apart from cars where 'premium' was understood to mean something specific was bread. (12) . . . Several respondents said they would never pay much for a standard sliced loaf but on special occasions would happily pay double for something that qualifies as a treat.

Packaging was found to be an important factor in charging extra for premium products, with sophisticated design enabling toiletries, electronics or food items to sell for far more. Shoppers are willing to pay extra for something that has had thought put into its outward appearance. (13) . . . Yet the knowledge has no impact on their choice.

The profit margin on premium-priced toiletries and beauty items can be as much as 300–400 per cent – and in excess of 500 per cent for hi-fi and other electronic goods (14) . . . In a crowded marketplace such as cars or mobiles it's far more difficult to achieve this transformation than you might think.

Example:

0 A B C D E F G H

- A The term is less effective, however, in areas where style and fashion play a smaller role
- B The product hidden behind this attractive exterior may be exactly the same as an item selling for half the price, and shoppers may be quite aware of this.
- C The results suggest that the term 'premium' means very little to consumers
- D A fifth of them went further, and dismissed the very word as simply a way of loading prices.
- E It follows that price and utility are not the only factors in play when it comes to purchasing decisions
- F With such an incentive, the challenge for marketers is to find the triggers that can turn an ordinary product into something consumers will accept as premium
- G The survey found that consumers were prepared to pay top prices for speciality items, just as long as prices for everyday products remained low.
- H When they succeed, marketers are able to charge high prices for the resulting product.

PART THREE

Questions 15–20

- Read the following profile of Bruce Petter, the new Director of the Management Consultants Association (MCA), and the questions on the opposite page.
- For each question (15–20), mark one letter (A, B, C or D) on your Answer Sheet.

Bruce Petter has not always been an executive. He started his career pumping petrol at a filling station, as he explains: 'After I left the army, my friend's father, who was Managing Director of a petrol company, recommended that I go into the oil industry. My great-uncle was running our own family petrol company, and I learnt the ropes at a petrol station. I subsequently married the daughter of the Marketing Director but this did not make for the happiest of scenarios. Depending on which side of the family they came from, my relatives thought I should support either my great-uncle or my farther-in-law, so I decided the time had come for me to leave the warring factions to fight it out among themselves and move on.'

He became founding Director of the Petrol Retailers Association. But after a few years he decided, 'I was getting to the stage where I wanted to move on again, so when I heard about the Management Consultants Association (MCA) post, I applied.'

He was aware that the selection process for the head of any trade association would, by definition, be protracted because of the difficulty of getting very busy

people with mainstream business interests together. The association had 30 member companies at the time, representing a large proportion of the best-known names in the sector, and 'they all wanted to have a look at this individual who had applied to represent their interests, so I saw an awful lot of the membership'.

His principal area of expertise, he feels, is in running a trade association and the briefing that he has been handed suggests that this will be of prime value. 'If you were to ask me if I was ever going to be an expert management consultant, the answer would be no. But I am, I hope, able to articulate their views, to push through policies they want to see in operation and to improve their image. I hope to make management consultancy a powerful voice in government and industry.'

The President of the MCA confirms what landed Petter the job. 'We saw a lot of people, but there were three things in particular that impressed us about Bruce. His experience of running a trade association was key and it seemed to us that he had a good understanding of how to relate to and inspire a membership made up of very busy partners, often in very

large but also some considerably smaller firms. We are also aware that management consultancy is not always portrayed in a favourable light and he has done quite a bit of work on public image and has some very positive views in this area.'

So, Mr Petter has taken over from retiring Director Brian O'Rourke, and a change of mood is now in the air. O'Rourke was at the helm for 13 years and his successor is reticent when it comes to predicting how his own approach will differ from Brian's. 'Brian did a magnificent job of sustaining the Association, of holding it together through thick and thin. I detect a 'bit' in his voice. But? 'I think if you ask anybody who or what the MCA was under his direction, the temptation would be to say "Brian O'Rourke". Petter feels his own style will be very much determined by the objectives of the members. He sees himself as a channel for those aims. 'I don't want the MCA to be perceived as Bruce Petter's empire, but rather the members' empire', he says. Mr Petter clearly has a difficult task ahead, but many of his staff will welcome a more open, modern style and there's every indication he will be a success.

15 What do we learn about Bruce Petter in the first paragraph?

- A He likes to think of himself as a loyal person.
- B He has a negative view of family run businesses.
- C His military background came in useful later in his career.
- D An awkward situation influenced the development of his career.

16 When Petter applied for the post of Director of the MCA, he knew that

- A a decision was likely to take a long time.
- B not everyone in the Association was interested in him.
- C he would have to face intense competition.
- D some members would oppose his appointment.

17 What does Petter believe he is able to change?

- A the views the MCA holds on industry
- B the way in which the MCA decides on policy
- C how the MCA is perceived by other people
- D the MCA's relations with other trade associations

18 Which of the following does the MCA President mention as a reason for appointing Petter?

- A his ability to motivate members of an association
- B his experience of working in different trades
- C his broad network of business contacts
- D his previous work in management consultancy

19 The writer notices that, when Petter talks about his predecessor, he

- A expresses some regret for how the Association dealt with him.
- B thinks he had been there for too long.
- C questions changes he made within the Association.
- D indicates he has mixed feelings about his leadership style.

20 Petter says his aim as Director of the MCA is to

- A modernise the Association.
- B carry out the Association's wishes.
- C set an example of firm leadership to his staff.
- D expand the membership of the Association.

PART FOUR

Questions 21–30

- Read the article below about sickness at work in Britain.
- Choose the correct word to fill each gap from A, B, C or D on the opposite page.
- For each question (21–30), mark one letter (A, B, C or D) on your Answer Sheet.
- There is an example at the beginning (0).

Sickness at work

Small firms are counting the (0) of sickness among employees. Research estimates that illness cost small businesses in Britain a month and a half in lost (21) last year. A recent (22) of more than 1,000 small and medium enterprises revealed that last year the average small business lost around 42 days through staff phoning in sick, and that this had a serious (23) on 27 per cent of smaller companies. Just over one in ten employees took time off for seven days in a (24) Of these, 9.5 per cent were ill for a week on more than one occasion. In Britain, employees can take sick (25) for up to a week before they have to produce a medical certificate. Owner-managers were far less likely to be off sick than their staff: 3.3 days on average, compared with the 10 days taken by employees.

The head of the research team said, 'The most common (26) of absence was minor illness, such as colds or flu, but back strain, fractures and the like (27) for very nearly as much. Of greater (28) is that more than 40 per cent of employers felt that their employees' sickness may not have been genuine'.

Employers can do more to protect themselves by drawing up adequate (29) of employment that outline the company's sick pay (30) Enhanced sick pay is then at the employer's discretion.

Example

A cost B price C charge D expense

0 A B C D
 ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐

- 21 A capacity B productivity C capability D efficiency
 22 A report B enquiry C statement D survey
 23 A result B consequence C impression D impact
 24 A row B line C series D sequence
 25 A leave B break C time D absence
 26 A reason B symptom C cause D motive
 27 A contributed B accounted C totalled D credited
 28 A concern B anxiety C regard D bother
 29 A details B items C particulars D terms
 30 A ideas B notions C policies D intentions

PART FIVE

Questions 31–40

- Read the job advertisement below.
- For each question (31–40), write one word in CAPITAL LETTERS on your Answer Sheet.
- There is an example at the beginning. (0).

Example: 0 0 N E

Employment with Kinson plc Staff Support Advisers required

We are a newly-formed division of Kinson plc, (0) ... of the UK's largest quoted companies, and provide business customers (31) solutions that combine leading-edge e-commerce technology and an integrated nationwide customer support network.

The formation of this new division has created a number of exciting and challenging roles within the call centres of two (32) our seven sites. We have vacancies (33) Staff Support Advisers. Working closely with the Business Managers, your job will (34) to gear the business up for the challenges ahead by implementing a programme of radical change. When completed, this programme will enable the management team to use our people resources more effectively, and (35) so doing facilitate the implementation of our company's business plan. You will be involved in all aspects of human resources activity, including providing advice and guidance to your business partners and policy development, in (36) to implementing any training and development initiatives the company may launch from time to time.

We are looking for talented individuals (37) good generalist grounding has been gained in a customer services or customer-focused environment where your flair and ideas (38) currently being underused. You must be able to influence business decisions from a human resources perspective and create innovative solutions. You should also be a resilient, adaptable team player, as (39) as having a track record of coaching others. In return, an excellent salary and benefits package is (40) ... offer. The successful applicant will have the advantage of outstanding opportunities for personal development and advancement.

PART SIX

Questions 41–52

- Read the extract below from the annual report of a bed manufacturer.
- In most of the lines (41–52) there is one extra word. It is either grammatically incorrect or does not fit in with the sense of the text. Some lines, however, are correct.
- If a line is correct, write **CORRECT** on your Answer Sheet.
- If there is an extra word in the line, write the **extra word** in CAPITAL LETTERS on your Answer Sheet.
- The exercise begins with two examples, (0) and (00).

Examples: 0 0 C O R R E C T

00 00 G R E A T E R

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REVIEW

- 0 The prime focus for management recently has been the integration into the Group of
- 00 Damon Beds. This acquisition is very much greater part of our strategy to grow our
- 41 presence in the UK branded furniture market. We are neither convinced that
- 42 leveraging the proven brand management expertise of which we are proud is the
- 43 optimum route to continued and sustainable growth in shareholder value. Overall,
- 44 sales grew more quickly than 9%, to reach £125 million. This represents a small
- 45 increase in market share such as our strategy to build share in growing, added value
- 46 sectors gains momentum. Our established brands had another excellent year with
- 47 volumes and turnover at record levels. While we have increased capacity to cope with
- 48 significantly increased demand, boosted by the return to television advertising in early
- 49 last year. The purpose of the campaign is how to reinforce our position as the UK's
- 50 leading volume bed business by improving brand awareness still further on and, more
- 51 importantly, communicating to consumers regarding the message about the uniqueness
- 52 of the product and yet the benefits and reasons for choosing our beds. Early indications show that the campaign is already having the desired effect

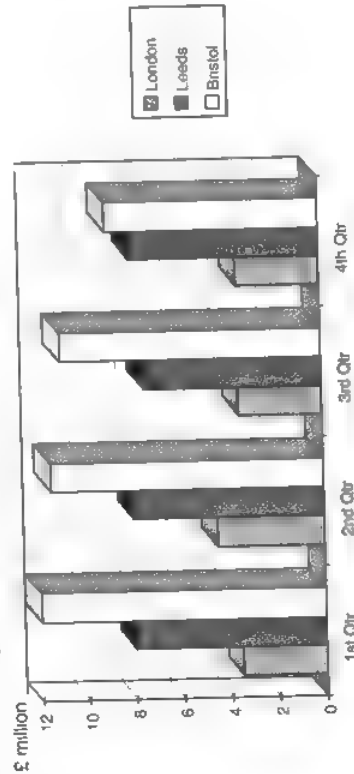
WRITING 1 hour 10 minutes

PART ONE

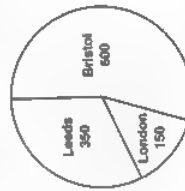
Question 1

- The bar chart below shows the profits made by each of a company's three factories for each quarter of the year 2003. The pie chart shows the number of workers in each of the factories during that year.
- Using the information from the charts, write a short report describing the trends in profits and the number of employees in each factory.
- Write 120–140 words

Profits from each factory per quarter (2003)



Number of employees in each factory (2003)



PART TWO

Write an answer to one of the questions 2–4 in this part. Write your answer in 200–250 words.

Question 2

- This year, your company has used an advertising agency to promote your products or services. Your boss has asked you to write a report about the advertising campaign which the agency arranged.
- Write the **report** for your boss:
 - outlining what the advertising campaign consisted of
 - indicating what you feel the strengths and weaknesses of the campaign were
 - explaining how successful you feel the advertising has been
 - suggesting ideas for future advertising.

Question 3

- You have seen the following advertisement and you want to enter your organisation for the award

Most Improved Organisation Award

If your organisation has made improvements in the last year affecting employees and customers, write and tell us about them. The most improved organisation will win a silver cup and money to help pay for a further improvement benefiting staff.

- Write your **letter** to the competition secretary, Michael James:
 - introducing your organisation and saying what it does
 - describing improvements your organisation has made in the last year which have affected staff and customers
 - saying how you would spend the prize money to benefit staff.

Question 4

- The Chief Executive of your company is concerned that staff morale seems to have deteriorated and has invited suggestions for making improvements.
- Write a **proposal** to the Chief Executive
 - suggesting why morale is low
 - outlining the effects of low morale
 - proposing some ways of improving morale
 - indicating any disadvantages of your proposal

LISTENING

Approximately 40 minutes (including 10 minutes' transfer time)

PART ONE

Questions 1-12

- You will hear a college lecturer talking to a class of business students about a supermarket chain.
- As you listen, for questions 1-12, complete the notes, using up to three words or a number.
- After you have listened once, replay the recording.

WILLIAMS SUPERMARKET CHAIN

- Initially, Sharon Tucker was Williams's _____.
- The company's programme of _____ its outlets was unsuccessful.
- Last six months 10% increase in _____ used by rivals.
- Tucker decided against policy of _____.
- The high-low strategy that Tucker introduced is usually called "_____".
- Williams calls its special offers the company's _____.
- The company delivers _____ to homes in the area of the stores.
- Example of special offer _____ for half normal price.
- Difficult to ensure that _____ are adequate to cope with demand.
- Success of sales strategy is due to planning and the fact that _____ is not centralised.
- Williams is now concentrating on selling _____ of stores.
- Williams is planning to extend _____.

PART TWO

Questions 13-22

- You will hear five people talking about a mistake they made at work, and about how they responded afterwards.
- For each extract there are two tasks. For Task One, choose the mistake that each person made, from the list A-H. For Task Two, choose the way in which they responded afterwards from the list A-H.
- After you have listened once, replay the recording.

Task One - What mistake did they make?

- For questions 13-17, match the extracts with the mistake that each person says they made, listed A-H.
- For each extract, choose the mistake that the person made.
- Write one letter (A-H) next to the number of the extract.

- | | | | |
|----|-------|---|--|
| 13 | ..... | A | I forgot to include some costs. |
| 14 | ..... | B | I didn't calculate the cash flow. |
| 15 | ..... | C | I miscalculated a time schedule. |
| 16 | ..... | D | I appointed the wrong person. |
| 17 | ..... | E | I gave out-of-date information. |
| | | F | I didn't check someone else's work adequately. |
| | | G | I complained through inappropriate channels. |
| | | H | I didn't allow for a rise in the inflation rate. |

Task Two - How did they respond?

- For questions 18-22, match the extracts with how each speaker says they responded afterwards, listed A-H.
- For each extract, choose the response.
- Write one letter (A-H) next to the number of the extract.

- | | | | |
|----|-------|---|--|
| 18 | ..... | A | by having my work checked by someone else |
| 19 | ..... | B | by becoming less impulsive |
| 20 | ..... | C | by accepting that I was responsible for others |
| 21 | ..... | D | by setting timetables for projects |
| 22 | ..... | E | by setting up regular meetings |
| | | F | by resigning from the company |
| | | G | by introducing a regular written update |
| | | H | by arranging to change jobs within the company |

PART THREE

Questions 23–30

- You will hear a discussion between two managers, Jane and Oliver, about recent changes within the company where they work.

- For each question (23–30), mark one letter (A, B or C) for the correct answer.

- After you have listened once, replay the recording.

- 23 Jane says the changes are being introduced in response to
- A a decrease in sales.
 - B the threat of a takeover.
 - C the level of staff turnover.
- 24 Jane says the ideas for the changes
- A were initiated by the leadership group.
 - B resulted from the expansion of the team system.
 - C were developed in conjunction with a firm of management consultants.
- 25 Referring to the skills audit, what problem does she mention?
- A Its findings were not acted upon.
 - B It included too many details
 - C Its results were inaccurate.
- 26 What criticism of the new divisional targets does she make?
- A They focus exclusively on product sales.
 - B They are too high for her department.
 - C They ignore seasonal fluctuations.
- 27 She says the suggestions scheme would be better if suggestions were
- A financially rewarded
 - B more widely publicised.
 - C encouraged from temporary staff.

- 28 Who does she say performance reviews should take into account?

- A suppliers
- B competitors
- C customers

- 29 She expects the new training programmes to be popular because they

- A provide a wider choice of topics.
- B involve a greater use of technology.
- C have more flexible timetables.

- 30 She believes that, within a year, the various changes will be

- A fully integrated into company practice.
- B subject to a review process.
- C adopted by competitors.

That is the end of the Listening test. You now have ten minutes to transfer your answers to your Answer Sheet.

SPEAKING 16 minutes

SAMPLE SPEAKING TASKS

PART ONE

In this part, the interlocutor asks questions to each of the candidates in turn. You have to give information about yourself and express personal opinions.

PART TWO

In this part of the test, you are asked to give a short talk on a business topic. You have to choose one of the topics from the three below and then talk for about one minute. You have one minute to prepare your ideas.

A Customer service: the importance of providing an effective after-sales service for customers

B Purchasing: the importance of maintaining personal contact with potential suppliers

C Recruitment: how to ensure that the advertising of job vacancies is effective

PART THREE

In this part of the test, you are given a discussion topic. You have 30 seconds to look at the task prompt, an example of which is below, and then about three minutes to discuss the topic with your partner. After that, the examiner will ask you more questions related to the topic.

For two candidates

Reducing Staff Turnover

You work for the branch of your company that has been identified as having the lowest turnover of staff. You have been asked to suggest ways in which staff turnover could be reduced in the other branches.

Discuss and decide together-

- what the reasons for high staff turnover in a company might be
- what effect high staff turnover might have on future methods of selecting staff

For three candidates

Reducing Staff Turnover

You work for the branch of your company that has been identified as having the lowest turnover of staff. You have been asked to suggest ways in which staff turnover could be reduced in the other branches.

Discuss and decide together.

- what the reasons for high staff turnover in a company might be
- what effect high staff turnover might have on future methods of selecting staff
- what procedures concerning staff induction and training might need to be introduced

Follow-on questions

- How can employees be affected by a high turnover of staff in their department? (Why?)
- Do you think a high turnover of staff can have a negative effect on customer service? (Why?/Why not?)
- Do you think there are any situations in which high turnover of staff is helpful to a company? (Why?/Why not?)
- Would it be beneficial for companies to bring in new staff to join existing work teams? (Why?/Why not?)
- Do you think people will change jobs more often in the future? (Why?/Why not?)

KEY

Test 1 Reading

Part 1

1 C 2 F 3 D 4 F 5 A 6 B
7 D 8 A

Part 2

9 D 10 A 11 G 12 E 13 F
14 C

Part 3

15 D 16 B 17 A 18 A 19 C
20 D

Part 4

21 B 22 D 23 D 24 C 25 B
26 C 27 A 28 A 29 D 30 B

Part 5

31 IT 32 OF 33 UNLIKE
34 DOWN 35 NO 36 IN
37 THERE 38 AS 39 TO 40 ONE

Part 6

41 BE 42 DONE 43 CORRECT
44 CORRECT 45 SO 46 YOUR
47 WHICH 48 TAKE 49 TO
50 SUPPLY 51 DOWN 52 GOING

Test 1 Writing

Question 1

Sample A

The development of the turnover of FROZEN FOOD Ltd.
The following report describes the changes in turnover by type of retail sector over the three years periods 2000 to 2002.
In all three years the turnover made by supermarkets was the highest of all three retail outlets. Department stores remained the second greatest before small shops-outlets. The turnover reached by supermarkets increased steadily over the three years and was £80m in 2002. The turnover of department stores was £50m in 2000 but fell to £35m in 2001. In 2002 it remained steady to the previous year. After a loss in 2001, the small shops-outlets reached again a higher level but could not reach the £30m turnover of 2000.

Band 3

All the content points are included and, despite minor grammatical errors and several lexical errors, there is reasonable control overall. It is a well-organised answer with an adequate range of language and fits the descriptors for band 3.

Sample B

Below is a report on the changes in turnover for three kinds of retail outlet, owned by one company, over a three-year period.

The overall highest turnover of eighty million pounds was obtained by supermarkets in 2002. On the other hand, the smallest turnover was made in small shops in 2001.

Over the year 2000, a turnover of fifty million pounds was reached in department stores, whereas it then plummeted to about thirty-five million pounds in 2001 and maintained this position throughout 2002.

The supermarkets turnover rose steadily from 2000, reaching its peak in 2002 with eighty million pounds.

Clearly, small shops had the smallest turnover altogether. Thirty million pounds in 2000, a noticeable drop to twenty million in 2001 and a slight increase of five million in 2002.

Sample D

Report concerning a new overseas market introduction

This report sums up the results of my investigation in overseas markets, according to what was demanded by the Marketing Director.
Findings

Staying a few weeks in this part of the World allowed me to collect precious information about the market, buying habits, competitors, and to gather complete figures and statistics.

I could carry out a market research interviewing potentials consumers on the street or even in sports shop. Then I had the opportunity to test local competitors' products and to visit production premises.

Furthermore, I analysed the data and found out two main competitors, X and Y, who both shares half of the total market. The others competitors are small companies representing few percentage of global sales.

Finally, teenagers are the biggest consumers. In fact, 30% of them buy regularly sports articles, while adults declare only buying once a year. Therefore, the main target profile would be a 15-year-old to 25-year-old male.

Conclusions

In my opinion, this market would be a great change for the development of the company and I then recommend breaking into it.

Recommendations

I suggest carrying out an advertisement campaign in order to make them know their is a new competitor. Then consumers are attracted by sales promotion like price reductions and I propose launching our products this way.

Last but not least, we could start offering three products to the price of two.

Band 3

This is a generally well-organised answer with good use of cohesive devices. The candidate uses an adequate range of structure and vocabulary with a number of minor, mainly non-impeding, errors.

In conclusion, the highest results were achieved by supermarkets, followed by department stores and then small shops

Band 4

This answer shows an accurate and natural use of language with a good range of structures and vocabulary. The slightly awkward organisation and the minor omission of a starting point for supermarkets prevent it from being a band 5.

Question 2

Sample C

Ways of break into a new market.

The aim of this report is to present some ideas of the actions to be taken in order to succeed penetrating the new overseas market.

First of all, it is fundamental hiring a well-known Marketing Research company in order to get all the information about the market of sport goods in that place. After that we need to know own competitors their strengths and weaknesses, in that way we can find our possibilities and opportunities against them. The company have to build an differential advantage. Another important issued is our target customers, people interested in sports and health and also the kind of sports that it can be done in that place, it is vital information that the company need to know before go to the new market.

For our brand, we need to be aggressive in our publicity campaign, by TV, making promotions and offering discounts in first purchase.

In conclusion, the company need to have the certainty that there are opportunities in that market and then gain all the weapons to have a good performance with characteristics different from the competitors and good publicity. In short time become market lider in sports good.

Band 2

This answer contains some irrelevance as the candidate has written a proposal rather than a report. Thus, combined with the number of errors, results in a band 2.

Question 3

Sample E

Dear Mr Smith,

I am writing to express my concern about your poor delivery service.

First and foremost, not only arrive the orders late, but they are also damaged. Secondly, when we telephone your office to report the issues, the durrty person is always busy on the phone.

Although his secretary takes our messages and tells us that he is calling back, we never receive his call. Finally, it is not surprising to have problems with your invoices, supplements and extra services which are included in our contract with your company. Because of this, I have extra-cost in telephone calls and paper work.

I will be grateful, if you do delivery the orders on time and in perfect conditions. Moreover, I will be easy to contact to you, if you do have more staff. And finally, it is important to issue correct invoices.

As a result of your poor service, I think it is only fair, if your company starts to improve. If I do not see any improvements, I will be forced using another supplier.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Amparo de la Iglesia

Band 2

All the content points are included and the answer is clearly organised with a good opening and closing. However, the number of basic errors means this is a band 2 rather than a band 3.

Sample F

Dear Mr Smith,

We have been using your company for a number of years, however, recently we have experienced some problems with the quality of products and delays in delivery.

As our customers have been devotedly visiting our shop for years purchasing the best quality products, we feel obliged to make some remarks.

Not only have we notice that the date for which dairy products should be consumed was extended but also in some yogurts we found that the labels describing the content were misleading. A cherry yogurt turned out to be a strawberry one. Furthermore, bottles of milk were not sealed properly which resulted in leaking and making the milk go off quicker.

On top of everything, there have been delays in delivery if not a non-delivery that occurred already a few times.

We trust you will give this matter your immediate attention and that everything will get back to normal, as we would still like to use your service. We hope it is just a temporary disposition. Sadly, however, we have to state clearly, that if no improvement will be made both with the quality of items and delivery we will have to change the supplier, for our customer sake and our reputation.

Yours sincerely,

Aneta Mroczek

Band 4

This is an ambitious attempt at the task, showing fairly natural use of language, despite a number of non impeding errors. It is well organised and cohesive.

Question 4

Sample G

I have carried out a research about company's internal communications and show you our study methods and our findings.

METHODS

1. We designed a paper to cover all kinds of questions which may show company's internal communications. Then we selected a team in charge of the whole process of implementing the survey.
2. We chose some people random who come from different departments to have a panel to express themselves freely regarding the topic. Then, we had a good record and notes of that. And some of them provide some useful suggestions.

On the whole, the methods we conducted the program are scientific and effective.

FINDINGS

1. Most of staff think we should improve company's communications.
2. The causes of preventing internal communications are as followed below:
 1. Different departments seldom exchange informations about what they are doing now and what are their newly outcome and something like that.
 2. Different team rarely use e-mail to other relative team of other staff to share their informations.
 3. The time to express oneself is too limited and everyone is just oriented to their own job itself and seldom share resources.
 4. The activities which are attended by different departments or different teams are not common.

PROPOSALS

To respond the above problems and findings, I will propose as below.

1. To CC e-mail each other in the internal company which include not only in the department but among departments.

2. To exchange information among different departments and different teams oftenly. In order to achieve this goal, we can organize different activities to create a atmosphere for them. Such as a panel, a training class, a outdoor travel and so on.
3. To open a company know-how discussion or training routinely to let every staff have a strategic idea and a long-term eyesight.

Band 1

There is considerable irrelevance in this answer and a serious lack of control. An appropriate format is used, but the lack of cohesion and non sequiturs (e.g. in 'Finding' number 3) result in a very negative effect on the reader.

Sample H

Making communication better

We have 10 people working in our admin department. All kind of communication between each other is very important and it needs to be quick and effective. At the moment we do send Emails for sharing happening in every day basis. We also have a weekly meeting where some of us get together and look over the subjects from previous week and also make plans for the up coming ones. There is also someone there to make notes which will be typed over to correct minutes and sent to everybody who attended the meeting.

My concern is that on those meetings we don't have the whole admin team present and therefore many times we have talked on the behalf of the ones who are not attending. This kind of communication might bring miscommunication to place.

To resolve this matter I think that we should have everybody on that weekly meeting to get correct information from the right people.

At least it is worth to have a go.

Best regards,

Kate Strak

Band 2

This answer contains frequent errors, which sometimes obscure communication. The content

points are all covered but not dealt with in depth. The end is particularly weak, leaving a negative impression on the reader. Overall, it fits more of the descriptors for band 2 than 3.

Test 1 Listening

Part 1

- 1 ACCESSORIES
- 2 MAIL ORDER
- 3 TURNOVER
- 4 (A) ANY STRUCTURE
- 5 CASH FLOW
- 6 (PROFIT) MARGINS
- 7 SMALL BUSINESSES/SMALL COMPANIES/SMALL FIRMS
- 8 INVESTMENT(S) (PLANS)
- 9 STRATEGIC (TARGETS)/ STRATEGIES
- 10 OBJECTIVITY
- 11 BUYING BEHAVIOUR(S)
- 12 TRAINING

Part 2

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 13 G | 14 B | 15 D | 16 C | 17 F |
| 18 E | 19 H | 20 A | 21 B | 22 F |

Part 3

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 23 C | 24 C | 25 A | 26 B | 27 B |
| 28 C | 29 A | 30 A | | |

Tapescript

Listening Test 1

This is the Business English Certificate Higher 3, Listening Test 1.

Part One. Questions 1 to 12.

You will hear the founder of a company called Manshee talking to business students about its development.

As you listen, for questions 1 to 12, complete the notes, using up to three words or a number.

After you have listened once, replay the recording.

You now have forty-five seconds to read through the notes

[pause]

Now listen, and complete the notes.

94

their buying behaviour. That made us realise we could increase sales if we allocated different people to deal with each group. So we set up four specialist divisions, and the most successful one has increased its sales by over twenty per cent, and that's the division involved with the training sector.

We're signing off the next plan for growth. People are sometimes concerned that planning leads to rigidity, but we certainly don't find that it stops us from being as flexible as we need to be. Thank you.

[pause]

Now listen to the recording again

[pause]

This is the end of Part One. You now have twenty seconds to check your answers.

[pause]

Part Two. Questions 13 to 22.

You will hear five different people talking about problems, and responses to them in the companies where they work.

For each extract there are two tasks. Look at Task One. For each question 13-17, decide which problem each speaker mentions, from the list A-H. Now look at Task Two. For each question 18-22, decide which response the company made to the problem, from the list A-H

After you have listened once, replay the recording. You now have thirty seconds to read the two lists.

[pause]

Now listen, and do the two tasks

[pause]

Speaker One

Woman: Well, now it's all over, I can only hope we've learnt the right lessons from the experience. Although the consultants at the time urged caution, the board were sure of the plan – after all, it was the sort of thing they'd pulled off before – and ploughed ahead with the launch of the new division. But the board wouldn't accept that the predicted boom in these new overseas markets was bound to be unstable because of likely fluctuations in currency rates and share prices, and that's where it all came unstuck. They reacted sensibly, though, and now we have

established a good joint venture there, which is a better bet than going it alone, or slashing costs all over the place and laying people off in a panic.

[pause]

Speaker Two

Man: In the end, you'd have to say we had a lucky escape – I mean, it could have been a lot worse. It's very difficult to know where your brand is really positioned... we've always accepted that our research almost inevitably will be running a bit behind. Consumer tastes change so quickly these days, and that's where we suffered, and lost market share. The directors, once it was clear what was happening, attacked the problem and looked at various options. They could have looked to generate revenues with a share issue, but I think they were right to go for cutting back by reducing expenditure wherever possible – you're better placed to re-group with a tight ship. The plans to develop higher quality products for the future look pretty plausible now.

[pause]

Speaker Three

Woman: Well, I now know to take all this talk about the importance of communication skills seriously. I used to think it was a bit rather woolly, but when you've seen the damage misunderstandings can do – I suppose the board was a grouping of people with such strong backgrounds individually that each of them expected to be top dog, and that it was perhaps inevitable that they'd clash over what direction the company should go in. Anyhow, it looked very grim for a while but, in the end, two of them took the pretty sizeable payoffs they were offered and moved on. From our point of view, at least it saved us from the prospect of the group being split up and the shares sold off.

[pause]

Speaker Four

Man: We were all extremely glad to see the back of that particular episode in the company's history. I know there's quite a trend to constantly reviewing your sourcing in the search for cost savings, but it was crazy to move over to such an untried firm. The trouble was we were getting nearly all our parts from them, so everything was leaving the factory here with

95

faulty components, with appalling results. We should have listened to the consultants, but on this one we thought we knew better. It got so bad that predatory offers were being made for the division, and we had to think hard about how to save the brand's reputation. Raising fresh capital through new shares was the right way to go and enabled us to cover the losses we made in sales.

[pause]

Speaker Five

Woman: I sometimes really do think that the people who know least about a company are the people who run it. . . . that's why there's such an industry in advising on and supplying the skills for managing change. We went along assuming that we were selling well because of what we saw as our core qualities – but we were wrong. It was just that we happened to have got our pricing right, so when we changed that, it all started falling apart. Things got decidedly grim for a time, and drastic action was required. A merger was considered, and an aggressive takeover had to be fought off. In the end, it was easier to accept an offer for the Budget Products Division, and avoid major redundancies, than to go on trying to keep the whole thing afloat.

[pause]

Now listen to the recording again.

[pause]

That is the end of Part Two

[pause]

Part Three. Questions 23 to 30.

You will hear a discussion between two senior managers, John and Deborah, about an assistant manager, Colin, who has applied for a new post. For each question 23–30, mark one letter (A, B or C) for the correct answer.

After you have listened once, replay the recording. You have forty-five seconds to read through the questions

[pause]

Now listen, and mark A, B or C.

[pause]

directly through warehouses, rather than through the standard agency channels

Part 1

1 D 2 C 3 E 4 B 5 A 6 E
7 C 8 D

Part 2

9 C 10 F 11 A 12 B 13 F
14 G

Part 3

15 B 16 A 17 D 18 C 19 C
20 A

Part 4

21 B 22 D 23 D 24 A 25 C
26 C 27 B 28 A 29 D 30 C

Part 5

31 WHETHER/IF 32 IN
33 ONE/SOMETHING 34 THE
35 FEW 36 NOT 37 FOR
38 WHAT 39 GO 40 OUT

Part 6

41 THE 42 DO 43 THEM
44 CORRECT 45 SUCH 46 YOU
47 CORRECT 48 OUT 49 IN
50 ALTOGETHER 51 THERE 52 UP

Test 2 Writing

Question 1

Sample A

This bar chart shows the number of positive and negative responses given by customers in a market survey about services at a leisure centre. Asked about the parking facilities at the leisure centre 700 customers responded positively, whereas 550 said something negative about it. Looking at the ticket costs there were almost three times as many people responding negatively than positive. With only 350 positive responses, the booking service was equally evaluated. For this service the survey counted 650 positive and 600 negative responses. In contrast to the ticket costs the attitude of staff was evaluated very positively. Only a fourth of the 1,250 asked customers complained about the attitude of staff. 950 people thought positively about the staff at the leisure centre. Summarizing the results of this survey you can say that there is need for improvement in the fields of ticket costs, booking service and parking.

Band 4

This is a well-organised answer which uses a good range of cohesive devices ('whereas', 'in contrast to', etc.). The candidate has used quite sophisticated language, and errors mostly occur only when more ambitious language is attempted.

98

Sample B

This report sets out the distribution of positive and negative responses given in a market survey about service provision at a leisure centre.

How did customers think about parking?

From the 1250 customers, 700 customers found that parking was very good and 550 found that parking could be better.

The customers found that the ticket costs could lower because they pay a lot of money for one single hour.

The booking service is a little bit more positive then negative. Customers think that the booking service is quite well now but it can be more suggested.

The attitude of the staff is well done because the customer tells what kind of idea she has and the staff thinks about the idea and work the idea out.

The results of the survey are very good for the leisure centre.

Band 2

This is an inadequate attempt at the task. There is some irrelevance and quite a few basic errors, some of which impede communication. The writer uses a limited range of structure and vocabulary, and the language is generally too elementary for this level.

Question 2

Sample C

Report on the first Dell-sponsored 'Bol d'Or Cup'

Introduction

The aim of this report is to summarize our first 'Bol d'Or Cup' and to demonstrate its benefits for our company.

Findings

There are four key findings which will be developed in this report: the description of the event, the aspects which were successful, the benefits we took and the further needs in this branch. The Bol d'Or Cup usually takes place in Geneva in June every year. The most beautiful and the most recent boats are competing there to gain marvellous prizes. There are only sailing boats that attend this cup and this is always a good occasion to see the last innovations.

Dell decided for the first time to sponsor this event: every boat had the Dell logo and a lot of gifts were offered: computers, notebooks, printers, webcams etc. We had invited our most important customers to watch the boats, some of them competed as well as a sailing team. The account managers were present as well, they could link business and leisure, meet new contacts, which was very positive for both. Everybody was very satisfied with this event and of course with Dell's participation. It brought us an increasing awareness on the market and gave us a positive image of a motivated and engaged manufacturer. We want to go on sponsoring this event but we have to consider the future costs for next year even if the first event was a real success.

Conclusion

It's clear that Dell's first sponsorship of the Bol d'Or Cup was positive: better awareness of the brand, interesting meetings. But the cost of this type of event is high and therefore needs to be measured for the future.

Band 3

This is a good achievement of the task and a well-organised answer. However, the frequency of non-impeding errors keeps it at a band 3.

Sample D

The aim of this report is to give an overview of the event our company decided to sponsor and present the benefits and the pitfalls.

Introduction to the event

'Computer 2003' was the fifth edition of an annual event held in Lausanne (Switzerland). Its goal is to present and promote the innovations in the IT field.

Its success

Designed to inform professionals, the event also reached the interest of the public. During the whole week, the guests took part very actively in the meetings, thereby demonstrating a huge and shared interest, and the public was nothing if not captivated by the demonstrations and shows.

Unfortunately, the opening hours were relatively restrictive and it was therefore really difficult for the visitors to see everything.

The place of our company

As a widely recognised training services provider, we were offered in return of our sponsorship a place to promote our books and training programmes, complemented by advertising areas.

We therefore have been able to reach many potential customers as well as other companies interested in consolidating their staff's knowledge.

In conclusion and for the future

Our company was really well exposed and reached many new potential clients. There is no doubt that our future sales will benefit from the numerous contacts our staff made, and the return on investment is therefore undoubtedly really good and worth our sponsorship.

We should consider this type of action more often. But, as our staff is not used to this type of publicity, we should consider a special training in providing the company and its service before doing this type of act on again.

Band 5

This is a full realisation of the task set. It is very well organised with an excellent range of structures and vocabulary and only minimal errors.

99

Question 3

Sample E

Re: Human Resources Department – restructuring

Dear Mr Blackwell

Further to our phone conversation of yesterday, I am writing to detail and explain issues related to the recent restructuring of the HR department. To begin with, I would like to outline what the situation in the department was before the takeover and what has changed since then. Previously led by a local HR manager, our team was handling day-to-day issues and was really open to listen and support employees. Since the takeover, we are now managed by a supervisor who is based in the UK.

As a result, it is difficult to touch base with him on a daily basis and because he's overloaded with his own team in London, it appears that he might not be able to involve himself with the current issues arising within our team.

I fully understand that the restructuring has resulted in increasing the workload in HR but as we are going through severe changes, the staff members need to be supported and guided by a senior manager who could provide them with a legal advice

Therefore, I suggest organising weekly team meetings with the new HR manager as well as arranging one-on-ones with each HR member so they can understand what is really expected from them and in which direction this company is going towards

I think that the above should be seen as a high priority because people tend to feel lost and insecure nowadays and, therefore, don't show a positive attitude.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Eric Marzi

Band 4

A very good realisation of the task, showing natural use of language and good use of a full range of tenses. There is, however, slightly inappropriate register towards the end

100

Sample F

From: Anastasia Antonova, Sales Department
To: Mr Smith, The Managing Director.
Date: 25 March 2004
Subject: Problems of Sales Department

Dear Mr Smith

I am writing to make you aware of several problems which have arisen in our department after it was restructured

Before the takeover we had very friendly atmosphere in the department. All the staff knew the objectives of the company and had opportunities to take part in decision-making. We could turn directly to the director and inform him about our wishes and suggestions.

Now we have some problems. The first problem is that there is no possibilities to communicate with high level managers and the director. Nobody in our department clearly knows where our company is going. We are not able to do our best if we do not know what goals we want to achieve. The second problem is that the staff does not informed how it is estimated. The managers monitor workers and constantly make notes but people do not realize what they do wrong. Many workers were fired without any reason.

These problems can be resolved if there are more communication opportunities between workers and managers. For example, you can organise meetings where everybody is able to express his views and make suggestions.

We would be very grateful if you could take any steps to resolve these problems. Because the staff is not motivated and this might lead to decrease in sales in our department

Yours sincerely

Antonova Anastasia
Sales Manager

Band 3

A clearly organised answer and the errors are generally non-impeding. It shows an adequate range of structure and vocabulary and all the content points are covered.

Question 4

Sample G

The aim of this proposal is to outline problems concerning export sales of our company and consider ways of improving them.

The fact is that export sales of the company have been falling and there are two main reasons for this. The first one is connected with appearing more and more competitors. It is not only us who export the product besides this product is also produced by companies operating only in the country where we export our products. The second problem is connected with the fact that the chosen market strategy can not be applied in the country where we export

To improve the situation it is strongly recommended to change the marketing strategy. First of all, market research must be carried out. It turned out to be that quality of the product does not always satisfy customers' demand completely. So we need to know what can be done with the product to improve it's quality. It was also found out that the advertising campaign is not oriented on our target audience. It may be useful to advertise the product on TV in the evenings and in some magazines for youth. After all, we may try to open our own outlets in the country where we export our products rather than to operate through dealers

Certainly, carrying out the market research and opening our own outlets can be very expensive, so we need much money. But anyway, market researches are always acquitted.

Band 3

This answer is quite good in terms of language but lacks coherence, leaving the reader perplexed.

Sample H

Objective: Export sales decline analysis

Introduction: the aim of this report is to bring to management attention the causes of the dramatic sales decline over the last 3 quarters.

Findings: As all of us are aware the main reason for this sharp collapse can be found in two different problems: the first, the devaluation of US dollar, the second an inefficient sales force and, in particular an incompetent export manager incapable of motivating the staff. While the first issue can be addressed with a more accurate analysis of the prices of our products the second will require a swift management decision in order to restructure the organization.

Recommendation and Conclusion: In order to address the first issue it is mandatory that management delegates more power to the CFO in order to adjust our prices to the new exchange rate on a regular basis. On the organisation side, on the contrary, management will be required to appoint a new export manager with more initiative and motivated to rebuild the entire staff.

Of course all this will require an additional investment of resources and some quarters of negative sales. In particular recruiting a new export manager will require an accurate selection process and an integration plan of a couple of months before tangible results can be seen. However I'm confident that the change will be extremely beneficial in energizing a very demotivated sales force.

Band 4

All the content points are included and it is well organised. It shows natural use of language with only occasional obscurity of meaning. The register and format used are, on the whole, appropriate.

101

Test 2 Listening

Part 1

- 1 MANUFACTURING, SCIENCE(S)
- 2 14 PAGES
- 3 HANDOVER/HAND OVER/HAND OVER(TIME)
- 4 DELIVERY
- 5 (HIGH) STAFF MORALE
- 6 CHANGE
- 7 SHORTLIST
- 8 PEOPLE/MANAGEMENT (PRACTICES)
- 9 MISSION
- 10 SUPPLY-CHAIN
- 11 SIGNS
- 12 ELECTRONIC TAGGING

Part 2

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 13 D | 14 B | 15 G | 16 H | 17 E |
| 18 B | 19 E | 20 H | 21 A | 22 C |

Part 3

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 23 C | 24 A | 25 B | 26 B | 27 A |
| 28 C | 29 A | 30 C | | |

Tapescript

Listening Test 2

This is the Business English Certificate Higher 3, Listening Test 2.

Part One. Questions 1 to 12.

You will hear the opening of the Factories of the Year awards ceremony.

As you listen, for questions 1 to 12, complete the notes, using up to three words or a number.

After you have listened once, replay the recording. You now have forty-five seconds to read through the notes

[pause]

Now listen, and complete the notes.

[pause]

Man: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the Factories of the Year award. My name is Jonathan Hargreaves, and I'm Chief Executive of the Institute of Production Research, which organised these awards, in

102

factory, its suppliers and its customers can make or break an operation.

This year's winners also demonstrate the importance of optimising the movement of goods and people around the factory. Confused, muddled-looking factories underperform, while successful ones use signs to help staff and visitors find the best route to their destination. And allowing goods or materials to get lost in some dusty corner of the warehouse is unacceptable: the problem of tracking components as they move through production has led to a number of developments, of which electronic tagging is one of the most exciting.

Now I'd like to turn to the individual categories...

[pause]

Now listen to the recording again

[pause]

That is the end of Part One. You now have twenty seconds to check your answers.

[pause]

Part Two. Questions 13 to 22.

You will hear five different people talking about visiting trade fairs.

For each extract there are two tasks. Look at Task One. For each question 13-17, choose the person's intention in visiting the trade fair, from the list A-H. Now look at Task Two. For each question 18-22, choose the experience at the fair that person mentions, from the list A-H.

After you have listened once, replay the recording. You now have thirty seconds to read the two lists.

[pause]

Now listen, and do the two tasks

[pause]

Speaker One

Woman: Well, there seem to be more and more fairs, don't there? And all apparently quite unmissable, which is fine, except I do actually have an office, and do need to get things done. So I try to be a bit selective. I try to make sure I've got my own agenda clear about what I want from a fair. With this one, for example, I wanted to see how our goods match up against our main rivals, by looking at theirs as if I were an

Speaker Four

Man: To be honest, I relish opportunities to get out of the office from time to time. It refreshes the mind, and you can get insights into

103

ordinary customer... noting the specifications and so on... basic market research, really. And it was interesting, gave me some ideas to take back to the office. Some of the brochures and other literature that I picked up at this one were quite striking, very high quality, and that alone made it worthwhile

[pause]

Speaker Two

Man: For me, fairs are a vital part of business life... where else do you get manufacturers, suppliers, agents, everyone all milling around together? It's certainly a great audience for the sort of talk I was there to do, and it meant I was able to communicate our values and commitment to service. Those are things our suppliers need to understand, so that we can get a full circle of quality from components to delivery and after-sales. And of course, I also had plenty of time to look around, do some networking. I realised there are places we haven't considered as markets that we should be looking into. The currency situation means our prices could be very attractive outside our domestic markets and get us good sales. So, all very worthwhile...

[pause]

Speaker Three

Woman: These fairs are getting so big... it's frustrating because you waste a lot of time just navigating your way around. I actually wonder how useful they really are in terms of achieving sales. Still, I have to say, that I gave me an idea for a couple of features we could incorporate into our main model, which would make it more attractive, I think. So that was a bonus, and to some extent made up for my disappointment about not securing a new representative, which had been my aim. I did talk to a couple of promising people who cover the Pacific Rim, but there were a lot of complications, different expectations... I realise it's going to take a while before we can reach a concrete agreement and build a solid marketing strategy there.

[pause]

what you're really doing. I'm pleased this time, because I've come back with the realisation that we can save quite a bit on packaging our new range of products are selling well, and in fact we're getting bigger orders than we forecast, and the agents are very optimistic . . . which all means we don't need to package up units individually, and that'll be quite a saving. It's important, because it's getting increasingly competitive all the time, with new products coming out almost every month. The other thing I've been trying for is better components, and that's why my plan for the fair was to identify new manufacturers of processors, because I'm not happy with our present source

[pause]

Speaker Five

Woman: It's amazing the way the industry is developing . . . I was walking around remembering such facts just, say, five years ago, and thinking of how many of the products simply didn't exist then. One of the effects of all this constant innovation is that to stay competitive you have to keep finding different marketing angles. That's what I was looking for, some kind of fresh approach to expanding our customer base. In the office, I tend to become absorbed in staffing issues, so I need to get out among customers and competitors. Anyway, while I was there I spotted a way of getting value out of our database. There's software available now which would enable us to analyse customer preferences and provide 'pinpoint offers' for them.

[pause]

Now listen to the recording again.

[pause]

That is the end of Part Two.

[pause]

Part Three. Questions 23 to 30

You will hear an interview with Steve Marriott, an internal business consultant with Carserve, a vehicle breakdown service.

For each question 23–30, mark one letter (A, B, or C) for the correct answer.

After you have listened once, replay the recording. You have forty-five seconds to read through the questions.

104

though the teams aren't physically working in the same place. How does that work?

Man: Surprisingly, perhaps, it makes them more effective. Because they know they're only coming into the office for a team meeting, they plan that meeting much more carefully than perhaps they would do otherwise. And between meetings they communicate by email or phone, and that tends to take the pressure off reaching a decision before thinking it right through.

Woman: Earlier, you mentioned the use of electronic communication internally, like the phone, and computers for emails. Have these replaced face-to-face contact?

Man: Not entirely. In fact, managers often work from home too, and staff are sometimes afraid, wrongly in fact, that a phone call will disturb them, or that an email won't be read on time. So, we make sure staff can regularly talk to their managers face to face.

Woman: Doesn't remote working make it difficult for managers to carry out their work?

Man: It certainly changes its nature. As part of our performance management process, managers visit staff at home twice a month. When everyone works in one office, you get on with some, and have less rapport with others, and usually that doesn't matter. But when you travel around visiting staff in their own homes, you have to develop relationships with them that are based on their needs, which may mean helping them with aspects of their non-working lives that are affecting their work.

Woman: So, have you organised training for managers, to deal with this new way of working?

Man: Yes, a great deal of thought goes into finding out what would most benefit staff. Many people would focus on how to use the technology, but in our experience that isn't a priority. We've already run workshops on managing remote teams, but many managers find it hard to let go of their traditional control, and feel that remote working is a recipe for chaos. We're trying to tackle this.

Woman: Steve Marriott, thank you very much.

Man: Thank you.

[pause]

Now listen to the recording again.

[pause]

105

That is the end of Part Three. You now have ten minutes to transfer your answers to your Answer Sheet.

[pause]

Note: Teacher, stop the recording here and time ten minutes. Remind students when there is one minute remaining.

That is the end of the test

Test 3 Reading

Part 1

- 1 C 2 E 3 D 4 B 5 E
6 A 7 C 8 D

Part 2

- 9 C 10 G 11 E 12 B 13 F
14 A

Part 3

- 15 C 16 A 17 B 18 D 19 A
20 C

Part 4

- 21 D 22 B 23 A 24 B 25 D
26 D 27 C 28 B 29 C 30 C

Part 5

- 31 HOWEVER 32 BE 33 AS
34 OVER/BY 35 TAKE 36 WHAT
37 TOO 38 APART 39 THERE
40 FIRST

Part 6

- 41 ALTHOUGH 42 OVER 43 ON
43 CORRECT 44 THEM 45 ON
46 CORRECT 47 THE 48 UP
49 AND 50 MAKE 51 EACH
52 BY

Test 3 Writing

Question 1

Sample A

Performance Report 2001-2003

Introduction

The aim of this report is to describe the company's performance in the years 2001-2003

2001

In 2001 the company's turnover was at its peak and the operating profit reached the 500 million dollar mark. They sold 10 million units what was the reason for this excellent result.

2002

In the following year, the company had to handle a decrease in operating profits of 20% as well as a decline of their turnover, which was a result of less units which were sold

2003

In 2003, the company was able to sell more units again, so they could increase their turnover but their operating profits still went down, because they had to pay the last year's failure.

Conclusion

The company's performance was great in 2001 and 2003, just in 2002 they had little problems because of a decrease of their units sold. The company won't have problems in the future.

Band 3

This is a reasonable achievement of the task and it is well organised. However, the language range is limited and there are a number of errors.

Sample B

From the bar chart on the last page we could see some statistics that show the operating condition of a company in the last three years 2001-2003.

In the year 2001, they got the highest operating profit up to 500 million US dollar. There is a decline trend of operating profit, the company made 350 million US dollar of 2003, the lowest profit of the 3 years

Turn to the company's turnover. It rebounded to 6200 million US dollar after a little decrease in 2002. The company's turnover reached it's highest record both in 2001 and 2003.

In the year of 2003, the company got the most unit sales up to 11 million, it is 2 million more than 2002's, and the record is 1.1 times of they made in 2001

Though the company made the highest record of turnover and unit sales in 2003, they lost in draw back the decline trend of operating profit.

Band 2

This answer covers all the content points and the organisation is sound, but it lacks internal cohesion. Grammatical structures are limited and errors are numerous and sometimes obscure communication

Question 2

Sample C

The aim of this report is to decide the consideration of building a new supermarket.

Description

At first I'll make a short description of the site. The location of the planned supermarket is very close to the city centre and surrounded by a lot of smaller shops. Concerning the infrastructure it is very well located because it can be reached by nearly all means of transport.

Advantages

As I already mentioned, the infrastructure is very good and you have good connections of public means of transport. Another positive aspect for building the supermarket is the competition. Our supermarket can offer much cheaper prices than all the surrounding little shops so we are very competitive.

Disadvantages

The first thing I want to put forward is that it is very cost intensive to set up a new supermarket in this area because the land prices are very high. The second disadvantage which I want to point out is that there is not enough space for parking and might be very expensive to build a garage under the building.

Personal opinion

To summarise, it is a very expensive location with less space for building a parking area but you have good chances for getting a high profit in the long term. Although there are a lot of smaller shops nearby the supermarket, there is no doubt in being the most competitive!

Finally I think that this will be a very profitable location for building a new supermarket.

Band 4

This is an ambitious attempt at the task, showing a good range of language, although it is not error-free. It is generally well organised, but the register is not wholly appropriate.

Sample D

May, 15th 2004

To the board of directors

Dear sirs,

You herewith receive my report acc. to the build of our new supermarket. I had a visit at the place the supermarket is planned to be build last week and I am totally excited to let you know following

First of all a lot of work has to be done because there is a hill at the site. But there are no other buildings that have to be rebuilt. The site is near a busy motorway and nearby is a big company

I think there will be enough customers (from the company or from the motorway) who would be attracted by our new supermarket because the site is on their daily way to work. Furthermore there is a big area to build the parking on it. But there is also the parking from the other company available because there is plenty of free parking spaces. I already talked to the director of that firm and he confirmed that it is always free because they have a second one. The only claim I have is, as I already mentioned above, that there is a hill on the site. But my opinion is that we will not find a more appropriate and cheaper place for the new supermarket than that. The location is good, we can save money regarding the parking and lots of customers are near

Because of that hill the place is also not that much expensive to buy as expected

Yours Sincerely

Steriane Seidel

Band 2

Although all the content points are covered, the limited range of structures and vocabulary, numerous non-impeding errors and the inconsistent register make this answer a band 2.

Question 3

Sample E

Dear Managers

I am a staff of the company. Several days before, our department went to check our new product line. After that, we don't think the product line is suitable with our company. We think the product doesn't fulfil the needs of customers of nowadays, because its colour is not still long, if you wash it for several times, it will get down from the clothes. What's more, the after-sales service is not very good either. If the customers came to our after-sales department, we can do nothing but change another one to them. That will increase our financial depress, and decrease our profits.

And, several years ago, the ABC company has created a same product line, the next year they have a big loss in the finance, the main reason is the product of this product line is not good. Then the company abolish the system, but it's too late, they lost the consumers rely, so they was bankrupting in the third year.

Last month we have take the order to buy the new product line, but in the process of collecting the informations about it, we know the things that the product line's weakpoint so we write this letter to the executive managers.

We expect the company can think over the problem, and make a wise decision to cancel the order of buying this product line.

We all appreciate that all of you make the decision

Yours sincerely
Richard

Band 1

This answer shows serious lack of control and contains numerous errors and possible content omissions, leading to a very negative effect on the reader.

108

Sample F

15 May, 2004

Dear Sir,

We have received your products, but we are very sorry that your products don't meet our requirements and your after-sales service is not satisfactory.

We placed the order on April 20, in which we had expressed our detailed instructions. As our customers requested, we ordered your new refrigerators by one thousand with the size of two by one by one metre. We believed that you could send us the right products as you used to. To our great disappointment, we found that the refrigerators are bigger than what we want. We have received a large number of complaints from our customers for this.

We think that it is understandable that there may be something wrong with the new product line, but your after-sales service really lets us down. We have contacted you for this problem and seeked for a solution. However, you responded slowly to our enquiry and your explanation and solution are not reasonable.

We have been good business partners since we established business relation two years ago.

We are always satisfactory with your offerings and after-sales service. We are greatly impressed with your excellent quality and quick delivery. We believe you will continue to do so.

We hope that you can give us a reasonable explanation as soon as possible, and most importantly, recall these refrigerators you have sent us, and deliver one thousand refrigerators to our specification within four weeks.

Best regards
Elaine White

Band 3

This is a reasonable achievement of the task with all content points included. It is well organised, but there are frequent non-impeding errors.

Question 4

Sample G

Introduction

The aim of this proposal is to analyse the recent drop in sales in one of our overseas branches and then to propose feasible ways to promote the sales there.

Findings

It is found that our new launched product – chocolate pie enjoyed a favourable market at the beginning of the campaign. However, the sales began to decline recently according to the figures presented by Sales Department. It is said that there are several factors cause the current situation but the main reason is the failure in the advertising we are currently using.

At first the advertising did work, the jungle is easy to remember and the stereotype we focused is funny. However, as time goes by, the local residents. However, as time goes by, the passion for it is gone, too. The survey shows that people began to feel it was too exaggerated and even a little bit hostile. And this leads directly to the refusal of purchasing our product.

Recommendations

We strongly recommend that we should cancel all the present TV commercials and launch a new one. And this time we should make it comparable with local taste so as to generate sales and more importantly to improve our company's image in the local market. If possible we can also invite some local stars to endorse our product which may change their negative attitude on the previous advertisement.

Band 4

This is a good realisation of the task set. The writer uses an ambitious range of structure and vocabulary, although there is some slightly unnatural language in places. It is well organised, with some evidence of cohesive devices.

Sample H

Proposal about improving the advertising, because there's a drop in sales.

The advertising in newspaper, flyers and TV is good organised. Next weekend we have some "roadshows" to show the customers our new car "Grandis". This events on the weekend are often used from families to look for a new car.

The TV-spots are also helpful to reach new customer. They are funny and short. The people would like to see more from these short stories. One change to our advertising in the newspaper should we do. In the advertise of the newspaper we have most picture from older people. The advertise says the seats are high and comfortable for them to get in. But we shouldn't forget the younger people.

We should make a mixed advertisement with young and old people.

Another change can be the appearance of our flyers. They lay out in the sales room of our car centers, but they reached only some people.

We could attract them and give them to younger people, which make their driver-exam. So we have to interest more younger people and families for our cars.

People who get there driver-exam, want to buy a car. So we reached them with new flyers in the driver schools.

New advertisements in the newspaper should also affect the sales, because of the bigger target-group. For families we should offer more events for children. Today children have an important part by car sells. If the children were pleasant, the parents are also, and they have the time to look for a new car.

I'm sure, if we do the changes, our sales will be increase.

Ingrid Schwarzkopf

Band 2

Although all the content points are covered, this is an inadequate attempt at the task. Errors are frequent and quite basic and in some cases obscure communication, and the content is not clearly organised.

109

Test 3 Listening

Part 1

- 1 MARKETING CONSULTANT
- 2 CONSUMER DURABLES
- 3 SALES CONFERENCE
- 4 (FREE) DIARY
- 5 (SPECIAL) PLASTIC JACKET
- 6 CONTROLLED EXPERIMENT
- 7 (FREE) CD; CALCULATOR
- 8 COMPETITION
- 9 CIRCULATION WAR
- 10 COVER PRICE
- 11 BRAND VALUE(S)
- 12 15%/FIFTEEN PER CENT

Part 2

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 13 E | 14 C | 15 H | 16 F | 17 B |
| 18 B | 19 G | 20 E | 21 A | 22 F |

Part 3

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 23 C | 24 A | 25 A | 26 B | 27 A |
| 28 B | 29 B | 30 C | | |

Tapescript

Listening Test 3

This is the Business English Certificate Higher 3, Listening Test 3.

Part One: Questions 1 to 12.

You will hear part of a talk to a group of business students about the role of free gifts in product promotion.

As you listen, for questions 1 to 12, complete the notes, using up to three words or a number.

After you have listened once, replay the recording. You now have forty-five seconds to read through the notes.

[pause]

Now listen, and complete the notes

[pause]

Woman: Hello. My name's Sue Barnard. I've come to talk to you this afternoon about that old marketing perennial, the free gift. I work as a marketing consultant, on a freelance basis, and I thought that I would begin with an anecdote.

One of the companies I work with is a major manufacturer of consumer durables, and so I need to keep in touch with the latest campaigns being launched by rival groups, as well as seeing how our own efforts are looking. So I'm a keen reader of weekly magazines.

Although I'm actually based in Manchester, last week I happened to be with some clients at their sales conference, which was being held in Wales. On the way there, waiting at the station, I popped into a newsagents for a browse, to pass the time. The March issue of *Prime* magazine immediately caught my eye because the cover said 'Free Gift this Issue: Free Diary'. And it puzzled me because I had seen the same issue on sale in Manchester without any gift. Clearly, people in Wales were getting the same magazine, but all packaged up in a special plastic jacket with this gift inside. Why, I wondered, were people in my area losing out?

Well, of course, the answer lies in the marketing policy of the magazine itself. No use giving everyone a freebie because then there'd be no way of gauging how successful it'd been in drumming up extra sales. In other words, it's a controlled experiment. In this case, flat sales of *Prime* in Manchester, coupled with strong sales in Wales, would indicate that the gift had done the trick, and this type of strategy is vital for magazines as more and more titles crowd the racks.

Just looking round the newsagents this week, you'll find one magazine giving away a book worth six ninety-nine, when the magazine itself only costs two ninety-nine. And it doesn't stop there. One rival is offering a CD, another a calculator. And so it goes on. You know, it really is a 'readers' market at the moment.

But, I can see you're asking yourselves, if the gifts are actually far more expensive than the magazines...? Well, clearly, the magazines are facing greater competition and it's all about offering your reader the best possible value. If your competitor's got something out, then you don't want to be seen to be lagging behind.

And once you've started, in a sense, you've got to keep on - you do get locked into a 'circulation war' where the only way to stay on top seems to be through the free gifts. And remember, it doesn't matter if the gift costs more than the magazine because the real profits come not from the cover price, but from the advertising revenues. To keep those flowing in, you need

good figures, and that's where the free gifts come in.

And, of course, it can't be any old gift. An inappropriate choice would do more harm than good. The gift must reinforce the true brand values of the magazine. The specialist titles are particularly good at this. And it's also a good opportunity for people to sample your magazine, it may bring in new readers. With the right gift, you could even be looking at as much as fifteen per cent uplift on your sales, particularly in the teen market, where pop fashions come and go and it's very important to encourage reader loyalty.

[pause]

Now listen to the recording again.

[pause]

That is the end of Part One. You now have twenty seconds to check your answers.

[pause]

Part Two: Questions 13 to 22.

You will hear five different people talking about workshops they have recently attended.

For each extract there are two tasks. Look at Task One. For each question 13-17, choose the aim of the workshop, from the list A-H. Now look at Task Two. For each question 18 to 22, choose the outcome of the workshop, from the list A-H.

After you have listened once, replay the recording.

You now have thirty seconds to read the two lists.

[pause]

Now listen, and do the two tasks.

[pause]

Speaker One

Woman: This was a workshop for department heads, and it was supposed to make us more effective and flexible in dealing with staff. We worked in teams of four, and simulated various situations, taking it in turn to be the manager and the employee, and after each activity the rest of the team gave feedback on our style and performance. That was really demanding, and, after a while, people began to get quite critical towards each other, and actually some people got irritable, but it was very worthwhile. We

agreed we were all pretty bad at doing staff appraisals, so we arranged for the next session to deal with this. Actually it was some people's first experience of looking in depth at their own behaviour and reactions.

[pause]

Speaker Two

Man: The Chief Executive was there, and all the senior managers and department heads, and the idea was that we'd plan how to introduce the new structure that's going to be put in place next year. First, the CE presented the company's objectives and the new organisation, then we broke up into small groups to discuss how to implement it all. After that, each group gave their comments to the whole seminar. Some very sensible criticisms were made, which the boss clearly wasn't expecting, but he did agree not to split up the marketing department after all. Anyway, we ended up by agreeing on a timetable for a meeting to brief the workforce and for the various moves, so we're probably quite well prepared now.

[pause]

Speaker Three

Woman: I went to something called a 'team role laboratory', which was for the manager, supervisors and all the staff of my department. The idea was to focus on everyone's behaviour and working relationships. It was a very powerful experience, as you can imagine, because it brought up all sorts of feelings. There's a lot of resentment at some people never being around when there's an emergency, and at the way one of the supervisors lets people get away with anything. In fact, this made him realise he's not cut out for the job, and he's since resigned. We also tried to establish what the department's objectives were, and it was an eye-opener to some people to discover what we're actually supposed to be doing, and how we fit in with the rest of the company.

[pause]

Speaker Four

Man: They'd invited the managers of a different-sized store in each division, together with some of the higher-level managers, and we were grouped in vertical lines. So, I was with my area

manager and her division manager. We had to brainstorm how to cut costs and improve margins in the light of last year's poor figures. At first, I was afraid of disagreeing with my boss in case it was held against me in the future, but, after a while, we felt more like equals. It made me realise how little I'm told about the big issues in the company; some of my suggestions couldn't be implemented for reasons I didn't know anything about. So, one good thing that came out of it was that my boss agreed to meet me and the other store managers once a month to tell us what's going on in the company.

[pause]

Speaker Five

Woman: Mine was a workshop on horizontal team effectiveness, which means that Production and Sales met to see how we could work better together. First, Sales said how they saw us, and we gave our opinion of them, then we each explained how we organise our work, how we're affected by other parts of the company, and so on. That gave us all a much more accurate picture of what was actually going on. And that led on to looking at how we could help each other more, which was very useful. We agreed on more realistic timescales for dealing with orders and on a system for the managers to consult each other on problems. We also decided to get together again in six months' time, to see how things are going.

[pause]

Now listen to the recording again.

[pause]

That is the end of Part Two.

[pause]

Part Three. Questions 23 to 30.

You will hear a conversation between Suzanne, a personnel manager, and Keen, her assistant, about recruiting new staff for a new factory.

For each question 23 to 30, mark one letter (A, B or C) for the correct answer.

After you have listened once, replay the recording. You have forty-five seconds to read through the questions.

[pause]

Now listen, and mark A, B or C.

[pause]

Woman: OK... now, next we'd better discuss the recruitment plan for staff at the new factory in Dunsdale. I don't think we'll have any problems, do you?

Man: No, not really. I mean, it's in a pretty good location for accessing a large workforce so we should have our pick. Anyway, I would have thought that our new policy of letting staff choose when they work within a certain time frame will appeal to lots of people.

Woman: Yes, I think we may miss out on the high-fliers who are looking to get up the ladder quickly, but it's more important to get a core of stable staff.

Man: When did you want to start advertising?

Woman: Has the Board agreed on numbers yet?

Man: Oh yes, that was decided before that last meeting when the top brass met – that's why they're pressing us to do something. I don't want to initiate it just yet, but we do need to do it in advance of the holiday period.

Woman: Well, OK. But I don't think there's any point in going ahead until the factory is nearly completed, is there? That way, we'd have plenty of time for planning.

Man: Hmm... that's a good point. Well, let's aim for that then. I'll try and get a date out of the Director. Right, now Mr Dawson asked me what we thought about appointing somebody to oversee all this because we're both going to be tied up here. I suggested to him that they send someone down from Head Office but he didn't seem very keen.

Woman: I don't think that's a good idea because they won't know the local situation. We'd be better off putting it in the hands of a recruitment agency – they could do all the initial filtering.

Man: The manager at the new factory wants to be involved but he can step in to help later on, which means we'd have some internal control.

Woman: Yes, that's a good idea. I'll suggest that. I also had a discussion with Mr Dawson about what kind of experience we would be looking for in new staff. I was quite surprised actually because he said he didn't think we need people to have done exactly the same thing as long as they had about four or five years' general work experience. But I pointed out to him that if we just take anybody from any field then we're bound to end up with a lot of wastage because a

lot of them will turn out not to be suitable. So I proposed that we appoint people who've worked in something similar. As long as they've got a rough idea of what the job involves, that's the main thing.

Man: Yes, I agree. Will the new staff get the same deal as everybody here?

Woman: What do you mean?

Man: Well, the canteen and everything?

Woman: Let me have a look... yes, more or less. There's the travel allowance, but we are going to look at that over the next couple of years to see if we are going to retain it or not. It's one of the possible cost savings. Also, although we're building a canteen there, we're getting outside caterers in – it'll be much cheaper than the system we've got here. The staff will have to pay slightly more because the company won't be making a contribution but it won't be much more. And then, there's the discount policy that staff get on our products – I mean, that operates across the company so it wouldn't work any differently.

Man: Will any staff move over to the new factory from Head Office, do you think?

Woman: Possibly – not the old-timers maybe, but some of our new staff might prefer to finish their training there if it's easier travelling for them. We'll be offering the same courses in both places. I guess, really, it's going to depend on whether they see better prospects for themselves at the new place. It will be a different set-up in some ways.

Man: Are we offering any incentives to persuade them to move?

Woman: Well, the salaries won't be going up, if that's what you mean! Actually, we're going to pilot a new system there – a kind of scale of rewards for targets achieved – it's hoped that will attract them. But it wouldn't be fair if we offered any kind of modification to the current share scheme. Oh... is that the time? I've got to go. We need another meeting though.

Man: What... to discuss the timetable for all this?

Woman: We can do that by email, I think. No, we've got to fine-tune the pay scales for the various positions – I mean, within the range Mr Dawson has given us.

Man: What about the contracts?

Woman: Oh, that'll be sorted by the Legal department first so we can hang fire on that for the moment.

Man: OK – I'll email you with some possible dates

[pause]

Now listen to the recording again.

[pause]

That is the end of Part Three. You now have ten minutes to transfer your answers to your Answer Sheet.

[pause]

Note: Teacher, stop the recording here and time ten minutes. Remind students when there is one minute remaining.

*That is the end of the test.***Test 4 Reading****Part 1**

1 F 2 C 3 A 4 D 5 B 6 C
7 F 8 D

Part 2

9 C 10 A 11 D 12 G 13 B
14 F

Part 3

15 D 16 A 17 C 18 A 19 D
20 B

Part 4

21 B 22 D 23 D 24 A 25 A
26 C 27 B 28 A 29 D 30 C

Part 5

31 WITH 32 OF 33 FOR 34 BE
35 BY/IN 36 ADDITION 37 WHOSE
38 ARE 39 WELL 40 ON

Part 6

41 NEITHER 42 CORRECT
43 CORRECT 44 QUICKLY
45 SUCH 46 CORRECT 47 WHILE
48 IN 49 HOW 50 ON
51 REGARDING 52 YET

Test 4 Writing

Question 1

Sample A

REPORT

This pie chart shows the number of employees in each factory in the year 2003. The factory in Bristol has the most employees with a number of 600. The factory in Leeds has 350 employees and finally, London employs 150 employees.

Bristol made each quarter most of the profits also it is slowly going down during the year. The profits in Leeds remain stable except for the 3rd quarter where the profits decreased but not dramatically. The factory in London has the worse profits, but they reached a high in the 2nd quarter. Afterwards the profits remain stable. As a result we can see that more the number of employees in the factory is high, more it will have a positive impact on the profit.

Band 3

This is a simplistic answer, but the range of structure and vocabulary is nevertheless adequate for the task and there are minimal errors. The target reader would be informed about the trend in profits.

114

115

Question 2

Sample C

Introduction

This report sets out to illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of our advertising campaign and recommend the appropriate version for future advertising.

Findings

In order to generate the competitive advantage in today's hyper-competitive global market, we had successfully engaged a well known advertising agency who has delivered its job perfectly. As the arrangement of our agency, we have attended an exhibition.

They have produced a series of pop advertisement show on television as well as building up a commercial web successfully. There are tremendous benefits have been generated by taking that three action.

1. Through attending the well-known exhibition, not only we have increased the awareness of our customer, but also we have demonstrated our product of new type mobile phone to their best advantages.
2. We have successfully built up the image of American myth among our target group – young generation through the vivid television shows our product is already the symbol of dynamic energetic image
3. Our customers have gain a easier access to us by visiting our newly launched web-site through which they can access to our automated order system and again the date they need.

On the other hand, the advertising campaign also exist some disadvantages.

1. The advertisement on television has narrowed the range of our customers. Not only the robust young generation should be taken account of the advertisement producing but also the dynamic business executives should be involved in our consideration

Conclusions

The advertising campaign has increased the customers' awareness and generated the sales, foster tremendous potential customers and enhanced our reputation effectively. Most importantly, all of these three ways of advertising have present our product effectively and built up our distinguished image among customers. The weakness also exist in narrowing our target customers

Recommendation

We should renew our contract of with our advertising agency and lure them to enlarge our image among the aggressive businessman and perfect our web advertising by giving our customers more tools to make them management their relationship with us.

Band 2

This is an ambitious attempt at the task, particularly in terms of vocabulary. However, it is marred by numerous errors, which obscure communication. This lack of clarity has a negative effect on the reader.

Sample D

Background and purpose of the report

Our company, Fish-pro Ltd, carried out an advertising campaign in summer 2004 in co-operation with advertising agency RGS Ltd. Aim of this report is to evaluate how successfully the campaign was carried out and also to assess main points which need to be taken into account when organising summer 2005 campaign.

Content of the campaign

In the campaign three different methods were used when the customers were approached. Firstly, the current customers of Fish-pro were contacted by sending them a letter including a catalogue presenting all the new products Fish-pro has available. In addition the general public was approached by the use of two mass medias: magazines and the radio.

Strengths and weaknesses of the campaign

The strength of the campaign was that by using three different methods to approach the current and prospective customers, Fish-pro was able to reach an audience of 100,000 future customers. In addition, according to the survey made with the current customers after the campaign, Fish-pro strengthened its image as the number one store of professional fishing equipment. The weakness of the campaign according to the survey and according to my personal view was that the campaign was very similar to the campaigns that the competitors of Fish-pro have introduced earlier. Therefore it is not certain that Fish-pro is able to increase its market share in the highly competitive fishing equipment markets.

Future advertising campaigns

When starting to prepare the summer 2005 campaign I suggest that Fish-pro would carry out a more visible and in certain ways more 'aggressive' campaign compared to the 2004 campaign.

Band 4

This is a very well-organised answer with fairly natural use of language and a good range of structures. However, the final content point is not well developed and there are a number of errors.

116

Sample F

Dear Michael James

I've read the information of Most Improved Organisation Award in newspapers and feel it a good opportunity for my organisation.

Well, our organisation is not for profit. The aim of my organisation is to help those animals which need help. We treat those lovely animals as our good friends because we think life is also important to those animals although they could not speak.

With development of industry, the level of life of human beings has improved a lot while that to those animals is getting worse and worse. During last year, we have saved about 1,000 kinds of animals. When finding a dying animal, we immediately send it to the animal hospital and then take good care of it. When the animal recovers, we actively get touch with those kind people who are willing to help or animal organisations. After sending those lives to related people or organisations, we leave our telephone number and keep touch with them. As far as we know, 80% of animals we saved have been leading a happy life while the others have died for age.

Every member of my organisation is perfect. They are kind and warm-hearted. Through our efforts, more and more people have come to realize that animals also have the same right of living as our human beings.

Comparing with those organisations for profit, I don't dare to say how much profit my organisation has received. But I think profit is not the only factor in the award, isn't it?

If we are honored enough to gain the award, we'll spend all the award on investment on animal hospitals and animal medical care. I believe that what we are doing is a good deed and we also believe that our organisation is the most improved one!

We're waiting for your reply and please contact me on 241989 during business hours. Thank you.

Yours,

Xu Xin

117

Band 2

Although the level of language is sufficient for a band 3, the question has been inadequately dealt with as the second bullet point has been totally omitted and the response is purely a description of the organisation.

Question 4

Sample G

Introduction: This proposal aims at showing why staff morale has deteriorated and suggests ways of improving the current situation.

Findings: Apart from most superiors' opinion that their subordinates are not happy with their job and have developed a low moral towards it due to unsatisfactory salaries and not enough fringe benefits, a survey among the workforce has shown that the real reasons for this problem are to be found elsewhere. Many of the employees mentioned their fixed working hours and yet constantly changing amounts of incoming orders, which – as they claim – leads to boredom at work on some days and pure stress on others. But even more staff members have complaint about constant organisational changes without ever getting the information of what exactly will change beforehand.

The effects can be noticed in every department of the company. Superiors and department directors say that their subordinates are not willing to do any extra work and are absolutely not open for any changes.

Recommendations: It is suggested that the first step towards a better work atmosphere be the introduction of flexi time. That way the employees can leave earlier when there isn't much work to do and stay longer when the amount of work rises.

The problem of organisational changes should be tackled in three different ways. First of all superiors are to be encouraged to pass more information on to the workforce, secondly the employees should become more involved in the decision making process and at last there should be annual feedbacks by the employees about their superiors. The downside of these actions is that they are quite time consuming and thus of course leads to more costs but on the other hand there will be less fluctuation.

Band 4

This answer shows a good range of structure and vocabulary, and a fairly natural use of language. It is well organised with good internal cohesion. However, there are a number of errors and some awkwardness, which keep this out of the top band.

Sample H

The employees' moral is at a very low level and get deteriorated over the last year

There are some reasons for that:

- First of all, the market is not growing which means that nobody is seeing how things could go better and nothing is moving forward.
- There are more and more cost's controls and in an other hand, employees can see other departments spending money for "useless" turn-ures
- Customers are requesting more and more and employees have the feeling they have to do more relationship, politic than real technical work.

Because of those, people are spending time by shouting around against customers, compagny and colleagues. They are criticising others, sometimes to times they answer "badly" to customer and their job's quality is falling down. The proposals to fight against these and to go back to the high quality with motivated employees are:

- Management should handle the political part out of the employee's job. Employees have to stay focused on their core competency, the technical things.
- By implementing web based training, employees could spent their "shouting" time to train themselves from their desk to improve their knowledge and to make their job better. By this, company avoid any extra costs for accommodations, travels and time spend in training classes

These measure bring more workload on Management and more time spent with employees and customers. Web based trainings means less time spent on "real" work because of the time needed to learn and assimilate the course's contents

Now listen, and complete the notes.

[pause]

Man: Good morning. In today's class we'll be comparing two supermarket chains whose futures are looking very different at the moment.

First of all, the Williams chain

Sharon Tucker joined Williams two years ago as Sales Director, taking over as Chief Executive three months later. The company was struggling. Sales growth was fading away, and profits were falling. Its strategy of focusing on redesigning stores was doing nothing to boost sales. In short, Williams had lost its way.

After just one year under Tucker's leadership, it's regained its confidence, and with good reason. Sales have been rising for fifteen months, starting almost as soon as she walked in the door. They're up by five per cent in the last six months, excluding new space, with profits over the same period rising by ten per cent. And the company claims to have attracted a million new customers

Tucker came from the American chain Hurst's, and her experience there persuaded her that everyday low pricing, the strategy pursued by that giant and by most of the British supermarket groups, wouldn't work for a small player like Williams. Its larger rivals could too easily undercut it

Instead, she decided to use a high-low strategy, which is generally known as loss-leading. The technique's familiar: cut the price of twenty or so selected items each week. The

radical part came in the implementation. Instead of making it a national campaign, which would allow Williams's rivals to instantly follow its price cuts, the company's 'best deals', as they're called, vary from town to town, and change every week. The company employs five thousand distributors in order that, every week, a third of all the people living in the catchment area of a Williams store receive flyers through their doors, detailing these special offers. The price cuts are dramatic, like forty per cent off breakfast cereals, the same off bars of soap, fifty per cent off soft drinks, and so on. Indeed, many items are sold at below the cost to Williams.

Shoppers seem to love it, as is evident from Williams's sales. But it's high risk: sales have to increase by enough to limit the impact on profits, and they have to be able to deliver the

goods. That's harder than it sounds. Some of the producers on offer fly out of the door, selling as much in a week as they normally would in a year. Organising adequate stock levels for that, on different products around the country, is a nightmare of logistics. What makes all this feasible, apart from very good planning, is that Williams's distribution system isn't centralised, unlike some of the other supermarket chains

Williams has just passed the first anniversary of its promotional campaign, so it'll be more and more difficult to keep sales rising. But the company's working hard to keep the momentum going with a renewed focus on fresh produce, having been tempted in recent years by clothing and electrical goods, which are both in highly competitive sectors. The company has also promised longer opening hours at their stores in order to increase convenience for their customers.

Now let's compare Williams's success with one of their suffering rivals...

[pause]

Now listen to the recording again.

[pause]

That is the end of Part One. You now have twenty seconds to check your answers.

[pause]

Part Two. Questions 13 to 22.

You will hear five different people talking about a mistake they made at work, and about how they responded afterwards.

For each extract there are two tasks. Look at Task One. For each question 13-17, choose the mistake that each person made, from the list A-H. Now look at Task Two. For each question 18-22, choose the way in which they responded afterwards, from the list A-H.

After you have listened once, replay the recording. You now have thirty seconds to read the two lists.

[pause]

Now listen, and do the two tasks.

[pause]

Tapescript

Listening Test 4

This is the Business English Certificate Higher 3, Listening Test 4.

Part One Questions 1 to 12.

You will hear a college lecturer talking to a class of business students about a supermarket chain.

As you listen, for questions 1 to 12, complete the notes, using up to three words or a number.

After you have listened once, replay the recording.

You now have forty-five seconds to read through the notes.

[pause]

Speaker One

Woman: I organise IT projects, and hire other companies or individuals to do the work. With one, the contractor told me halfway through that it couldn't be done the way I'd planned it, and it would be overdue. I took a chance that he was wrong, but he wasn't, and it really inflated the cost of the project, because of course the contractor's staff had to be paid for longer. When my boss found out, I only managed to keep my job by suggesting that I email him weekly progress reports on any future projects, and notify him of any potential or actual problems. It really helped me too, because I think if you make a mistake, you shouldn't just say, 'It won't happen again', you have to make sure it doesn't.

[pause]

Speaker Two

Man: I worked for a publisher where you were allocated an art editor per issue from a studio team. I always got the useless one, because everyone else refused to work with him: he was so bad he should never have been given the job in the first place. In the end, I suddenly snapped, and instead of having a quiet word with my boss, as I should have done, I dashed off a furious memo about him to the head of his department. Well, that put me in the wrong, everyone was very angry with me, and I came very close to resigning. It certainly taught me not to rush into things: what seems the obvious course of action in the heat of the moment isn't necessarily the most effective one.

[pause]

Speaker Three

Woman: When I worked in import-export, the best thing I ever did was getting myself transferred from one section to another. It happened because I'd calculated how much we should charge a customer for some goods we were going to import on a regular basis, and didn't allow for our agent's commission. When the invoices started coming in, I realised we were making a loss. I tried to increase the price to the customer without telling my boss, but, in the end, I had to admit what I'd done, and I think that's the only reason I didn't get the sack. It gave us quite serious cash flow problems for a

120

For each question 23-30, mark one letter (A, B or C) for the correct answer

After you have listened once, replay the recording questions.

[pause]

Now listen, and mark A, B or C.

[pause]

Man: So Jane, the changes are certainly quite wide-ranging, aren't they?

Woman: Yes, Oliver, the skills audit, targets, suggestion scheme, training arrangements ... the list seems endless ...

Man: I suppose different people will react differently - they won't all see the benefits of the changes ...

Woman: Sure - and for some people, they'll feel their areas of responsibility are being taken over, become resentful, and the company must tread very carefully here ... because it's the tide of high turnover that the company is striving to stem with these measures. These days, it's often service that's the key to maintaining an edge so what the company needs to avoid happening in the future is sales decreasing. I don't stop feeling they're getting that treatment from happy, motivated staff here.

Man: Mm ... I guess it was Human Resources that pushed for the changes, then?

Woman: Well, they were consulted. Actually, they're the kinds of ideas that you might have expected the team system might have generated - because they're quite wide-ranging, not just focused on one aspect. So, I guess it's quite surprising, in a way, that it was the leadership group which authorised them ... what's good, I think, is the way they've spent quite an amount of time consulting with management at all levels, so they have a kind of hands-on feel.

Man: So what will affect us first?

Woman: Well, the skills audit, though its real effects won't be apparent for some time. I don't know, I think that was a wasted opportunity, really ... It was so thorough, too thorough in fact ... I mean, they asked absolutely everyone about absolutely everything because they were so obsessed with wanting to be accurate, but the result is they're just swamped with information ... they didn't need to be that in-depth ...

Man: Uh huh ... So is it really these divisional targets that will have the first impact?

Woman: Er, yeah, I suppose ... but then again, there's some poor design involved there ... Oh, sure, they've carefully calculated how sales move throughout the year, but the point is that it's not only shifting actual products that counts - the targets should really be looking at data on customer satisfaction too, which is certainly a major concern in my section, where we're always looking for ways to keep that high enough to retain customers.

Man: So, are you unconvinced about the suggestions scheme too?

Woman: Er ... I just think they should have gone further with it. After all the publicity it's been given, you'd think they'd want to involve everyone ... what you don't want is just the same ideas from the same people all the time ... we've got all these short-term workers, they're in and out of organisations all the time ... we should be trying to capture their insights and observations, especially since they won't personally stand to benefit from making suggestions.

Man: And do you think the performance reviews are similarly flawed in their approach?

Woman: Oh, I don't want to seem too negative! The only unfortunate thing there is not incorporating what competitors are doing. We don't want to be saying one of our reps is underperforming at the moment, only to find out that so is everyone in the business at the moment. That could be very unfair, especially on the reps abroad, who are at the mercy of the supply situation too.

Man: And do you think that people have been missed out of the training programmes as well?

Woman: No, there I'm quite positive! They've been spent on trying to get our training right, and I think the final results are great. We've been far too focused on IT training, and it's much better now that it's broadening out to include more aspects for staff to select from, according to their needs.

Man: So would you see all the changes having a lasting impact?

Woman: Well, they must have some kind of future after all, they're the kind of thing our competitors have been doing for some time. But, well, by the end of the year, I'm fairly sure they'll get scrutinised, thoroughly checked and

121

probably revised before they become fixed as company policy in the long term.

Man: So it's a case of wait and see?

Woman: Definitely. Now...

[pause]

Now listen to the recording again.

[pause]

That is the end of Part Three. You now have ten minutes to transfer your answers to your Answer Sheet.

[pause]

Note: Teacher, stop the recording here and time ten minutes. Remind students when there is one minute remaining.

That is the end of the test.

INTERLOCUTOR FRAMES

To facilitate practice for the Speaking test, the scripts followed by the Interlocutor for Parts 2 and 3 appear below. They should be used in conjunction with Tests 1-4 Speaking tasks. These tasks are contained in booklets in the real Speaking test. Interlocutor frames are not included for Part 1, in which the interlocutor asks the candidates questions directly rather than asking them to perform tasks.

Part 2: Mini presentations (about six minutes)

Interlocutor:

- Now, in this part of the test, I'm going to give each of you a choice of three different topics. I'd like you to select one of the topics and give a short presentation on it for about a minute. You will have a minute to prepare this and you can make notes if you wish. After you have finished your talk, your partner will ask you a question.
- All right? Here are your topics. Please don't write anything in the booklet.

[Interlocutor hands each candidate a booklet and a pencil and paper for notes.]

Interlocutor:

- Now B, which topic have you chosen, A, B or C?
- A, please listen carefully to B's talk and then ask him/her a question about it.

[Candidate B speaks for one minute.]

Interlocutor:

- Thank you. Now, A, please ask B a question about his/her talk.

[Candidate A asks a question.]

Interlocutor:

- Now, A, which topic have you chosen, A, B or C?
- B, please listen carefully to A's talk and then ask him/her a question about it.

[Candidate A speaks for one minute.]

Interlocutor:

- Thank you. Now, B, please ask A a question about his/her talk.

[Candidate B asks a question.]

Interlocutor:

- Thank you.
- Can I have the booklets, please?

Part 3: Collaborative task and discussion (about seven minutes)

Interlocutor:

- Now, in this part of the test you are going to discuss something together.

[Interlocutor holds the booklet open at the task while giving the instructions below.]

Interlocutor:

- You will have 30 seconds to read this task carefully, and then about three minutes to discuss and decide about it together. You should give reasons for your decisions and opinions. You don't need to write anything. Is that clear?

[Interlocutor places the booklet in front of the candidates so they can both see it.]

Interlocutor:

- I'm just going to listen and then ask you to stop after about three minutes. Please speak so that we can hear you.

[Candidates have about three minutes to complete the task.]

Interlocutor:

- Can I have the booklet, please?

[Interlocutor asks one or more of the following questions as appropriate, to extend the discussion.]

Example:

- Would you be willing to spend a long time travelling to work every day? (Why?/Why not?)
- Should companies provide staff with financial assistance if they have long journeys to work? (Why?/Why not?)
- What do you think influences a company's decision to be located in a busy city centre? (Why?)
- What effect do you think technology will have in the future on where people do their work? (Why?)
- What could be the long-term effects of changes in the hours people work and where they work? (Why?)

Thank you. That is the end of the test.

... Past Papers

BEC HIGHER³

STUDENT'S BOOK WITH ANSWERS

Cambridge University Press is the only official publisher of past papers from Cambridge ESOL - an essential part of any student's exam preparation.

This 3rd collection of practice tests for BEC Higher provides all the exam practice you need. It contains:

- four authentic past papers that provide genuine exam practice
- a helpful overview of the BEC Higher exam to familiarise you with its format
- photocopiable answer sheets so you can practise transferring your answers
- answer keys and recording scripts making it ideal for self-study.

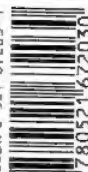
An audio CD and cassette containing the recorded material for the Listening paper is also available.

The Cambridge BEC Higher examination corresponds to Council of Europe Level C1 (ALTE Level 4).



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS
www.cambridge.org

ISBN 0-521-67203-1



9 780521 672030